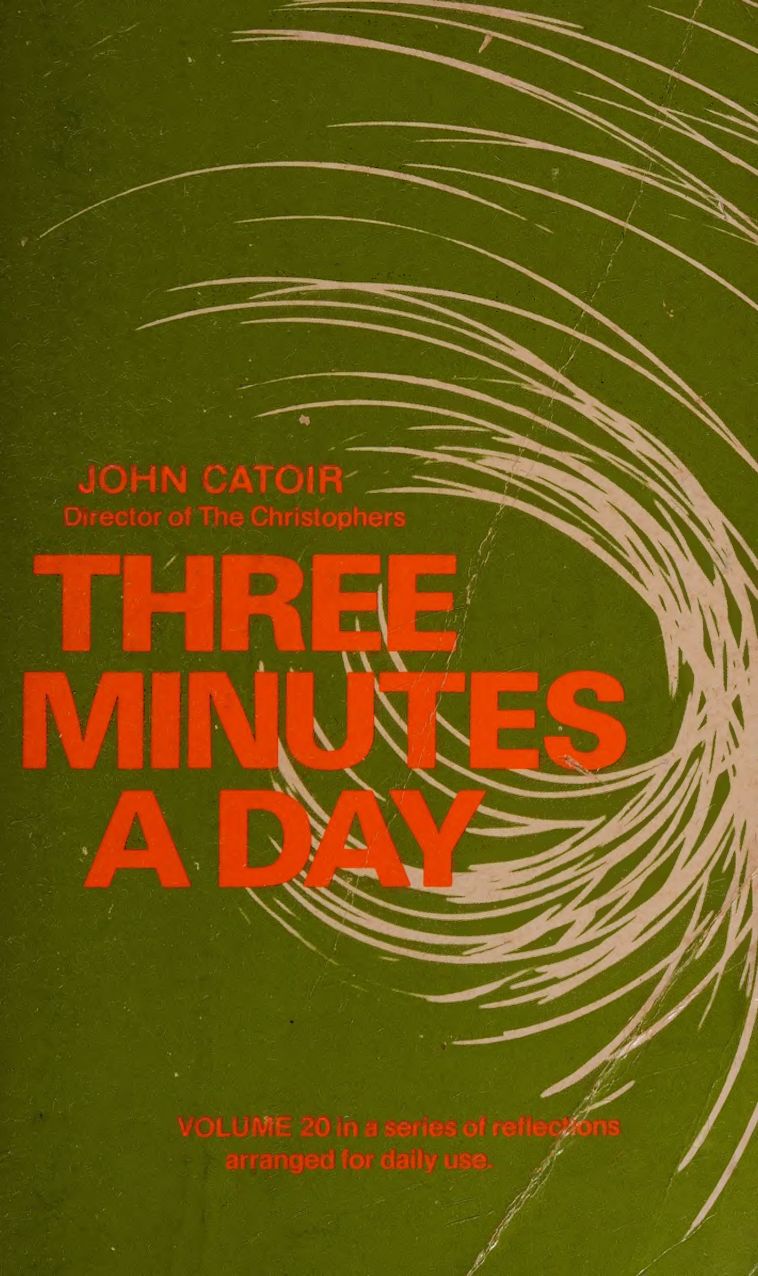




JOHN CATOIR
Director of The Christophers

THREE MINUTES A DAY

VOLUME 20 in a series of reflections
arranged for daily use.

THREE MINUTES A DAY

Vol. 20

Three Minutes A Day

Father John Catoir

Director, The Christophers

20th volume in a series containing an inspirational story for each day of the year. Arranged and edited by Joseph R. Thomas and Maryann Sanagorski.

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Introduction

For the last eight years, this book has been issued under as many different titles, even though the format is the same as it was when Father James Keller published the first *Three Minutes a Day* volume. Now, with the 20th volume in the series, we are returning to the initial title to catch the flavor of that original inspiration.

Three minutes a day—that's just about how long it takes to read each piece. However, you can reflect on the lesson contained in it throughout the day.

How should you use the book? We hesitate to advise in this area because each person is so different and each person's day is so different. But I would suggest that you read it one day at a time, at a time each day when you have a few minutes of quiet.

For some that might be in the morning, for others it might be the night before, for still others it might be a midday break. Whatever time you choose, stick with it so the reading becomes a habit, one which enables you to quiet your spirit and open yourself to God's grace.

We all need time to renew our good intentions as we grow in wisdom, age and grace. Knowing well that good actions spring from reflection and prayer we present this latest volume for your reading enjoyment and inspiration.

Father Catoir

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She'd Make Time for Fun

January 1

Nadine Stair, 85, of Louisville, Ky., reflects on her life in Family Circle magazine:

"I'd dare to make more mistakes next time. I'd relax, I would limber up . . . I would take fewer things seriously.

"I would take more chances. I would climb more mountains and swim more rivers . . . I would perhaps have more actual troubles, but I'd have fewer imaginary ones.

"You see, I'm one of those people who live sensibly and sanely hour after hour, day after day. Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had it to do over again, I'd have more of them. . . .

"Just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day . . .

"I would start barefoot earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall . . . I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daisies."

Perhaps it is only when we permit ourselves light-heartedness that we can lighten the hearts of others.

"Let your heart be cheerful." (1 Kgs. 22:7)

Help me, Father, to worship You in joy.

One Man Changed Our Language

January 2

Can one person really make a difference? An obscure young schoolteacher in Somers, N.Y., thought so. In 1783, he completed a book that eventually sold 100 million copies.

Noah Webster thought that political independence from England wasn't enough. He said he had "too much pride to stand indebted to England for books to teach our children."

Webster's "Spelling Book" was an important step in the liberation of American literature. He deleted the "u" from such words as "honour" and shortened words like "programme" and "musick."

History and science as well as rules for proper behavior were contained in his famous "blue-backed speller." In it he attempted to correct the "atrocious pronunciation which exists everywhere."

The speller was a prelude to his landmark dictionary, published in 1828. Later came a grammar book and a reader.

Not wanting his books pirated, Webster was influential in getting a copyright law passed by Congress in 1831.

Noah Webster had a sense of mission. He pursued his goal day and night, though he never made much money on his writings. What are you and I aiming at? What are our ideals?

**"The steps of a man are from the Lord."
(Ps. 37:23)**

Father, when we need it, remind us of where we came from, why we are here—and where we are going.

Because One Person Cared . . .

January 3

In the harsh winter of 1954, a hero of the French Resistance, a Capuchin monk known as Abbe Henri Pierre mobilized the entire government and people of France to do something for the poor.

Today, Abbe Pierre, 65, lives in one of the 8,000 low-rent apartments he has helped build in the Paris area. He has founded 52 self-sustaining communes in France and helped 100 others throughout the world. He calls it the Emmaus movement after the New Testament town near which two disciples met the risen Christ.

It is supported by the people selling scrap paper and repairing and marketing broken furniture and appliances.

The Emmaus motto is "Give instant help to those nearest and in need. Show them how to help themselves. Afterward, let them help others."

Thousands have decent housing, food and jobs because one man saw a need and began to fill it.

If we can pick out one person, one situation in our own life that we can affect, God can be trusted to supply for what we lack.

"Trust in the Lord, and do good." (Ps. 37:3)

Grant us a greater measure of courage, Jesus, to follow You with trusting hearts.

Up in the Air With Fear

January 4

Perhaps as many as one person in every four or five—business executives, entertainers, and diplomats among them—is an “anxious flyer,” according to psychologist Maurice Yaffe of Guy’s Hospital, London.

For these aerophobics, flying means cold sweats, upset stomach, shakes, tight muscles and grinding teeth.

Dr. Yaffe helps by having them list the 10 things they hate the most about flying, from most to least frightening. Then he helps them face these fears one by one, starting at the bottom of the list.

One thing that prevents us from doing more good for ourselves and others is the paralyzing fear of failure, ridicule or harm. Making a list of our fears can help us get them out in the open, where we can deal with them.

Jesus cautioned His followers about giving in to fear. Today too He offers help that with courage we can confront obstacles that might keep us from doing His work in the world.

“Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?” (Mt. 8:26)

Give us a lively sense of Your presence, Jesus, so we may draw on the power You make available.

The Virtue of Preparation

January 5

Picture yourself as a truck driver with a cargo of sulfuric acid when a motorcyclist skids into your path. To avoid hitting him you swerve sharply but your trailer overturns at the side of the road and you are injured.

What do you do? In this actual case, the driver asked a passerby to call a toll-free number to reach the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (CHEMTREC) in Washington.

There a CHEMTREC official checked his files to determine possible hazards and called the local sheriff in Greenville, Tex., with directions on how to handle the potentially dangerous situation. Then he phoned the shipper and the headquarters of the carrier. Tragedy was averted.

CHEMTREC was established in 1971 by the Manufacturing Chemists Association to provide the quickest possible response to accidents involving unknown chemicals. In the eight succeeding years it handled 62,000 accidents on a round-the-clock basis.

Preparedness is the key to coping with the unexpected. If we anticipate possible emergencies and ways of dealing with them then we can be confident of our readiness to meet the challenges of each day.

“Prepare to meet your God.” (Amos 4:12)

Help us to look ahead, Father, so that when quick action is required we will be ready.

A Catalog for Southpaws

January 6

There are more than 22 million left-handed people in the country. Because tools are designed for righties, lefties have great difficulty using scissors, corkscrews, ice-cream scoops, kitchen utensils and spiral notebooks.

To meet this widespread inconvenience, two men from Westport, Conn., published the "Lefty Survival Manual." It is a sales catalog chock full of instruments designed specifically for lefties.

"Once it was frowned on to be a lefty," notes Gerald Glichenhouse, who co-produced the manual with Pete Neiman.

"For a long time, lefthanders got their hands slapped in school when they tried to write with their left hand. Sometimes the hand was even tied behind their backs to make them conform."

"All that is changing," he says. "Now people are being allowed to develop more naturally."

We harm children if we stifle individuality. Each has certain natural tendencies that need to be nurtured if they are to develop into the responsible adults God wants all of us to be. Encouragement brings out the best in us all.

"Do not neglect the gift you have." (1 Tim. 4:14)

Grant us the sensitivity, Lord, to help those we love develop their natural skills.

Johnny-on-the-Spot

January 7

Charles Dasch, 77, is a hard man to keep down. In fact, no one and nothing have kept him down yet.

Back in 1913, as a teenager in Baltimore, he went to work to support his mother, five sisters and brother. He lost an arm in a piece of machinery he had been assigned to oil. He was given a small cash settlement but lost his job.

When local authorities threatened to break up the penniless family, the youth went to Annapolis to complain to the governor. The visit gained him publicity, kept the family together and brought in public donations.

At 21, Dasch rescued a man from a car that had gone off a dock into the water. A few years later, he was selling crab cakes from a horse cart in Baltimore when he caught someone who had attacked a woman.

In Philadelphia in the 1930s, he evacuated dozens of people from a deadly hotel fire in which he was overcome by smoke. More recently, he has been a crusader for the rights of the elderly in Woodbury, N.J., where at the age of 72 he ran for public office.

Do opportunities make people—or do people make opportunities? Charles Dasch would have made his mark no matter where he lived. Ask God to make you a self-starter.

“I am sure that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.” (Phil. 1:6)

Jesus, inspire us to be people who can't be kept down rather than people who always need to be propped up.

Young People Face Death With Courage

January 8

By getting his youthful patients to talk about death Dr. Gerald Jampolsky helps them find peace of mind as they themselves face the prospect of death.

In his Center for Attitudinal Healing in Tiburon, Cal., Dr. Jampolsky treats about 40 young persons who have a limited lifespan as a result of disease (usually cancer) or an accident.

His patients range up to 19 in age and meet twice a month to talk openly about pain and death.

"Children seem more capable than adults of facing their fate heroically," says Dr. Jampolsky.

"They quickly learn to help one another overcome pain and defeat, sometimes healing themselves in the process."

Eleven of his young patients wrote a book called "There Is a Rainbow Behind Every Dark Cloud." Before the death of one 11-year-old contributor the other young people visited him often.

"It didn't upset them," said the doctor. "They don't see death as the end of the line."

"God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more." (Rev. 21:4)

Holy Spirit, enable us to view death as well as life as part of Your loving plan.

Prisoners Run Day-Care Centers

January 9

A day-care center in a prison? That's not as surprising as it sounds because relatives with small children often come long distances to visit inmates.

What is unusual in at least a dozen prisons around the country is that, except for an outside director, the all-volunteer staff consists of other prison inmates. Once skepticism by correction officials had been overcome, such programs have proven successful.

The effort is the brainchild of the Children's TV Workshop, and toddlers can watch their favorite characters on "Sesame Street" while older children view "The Electric Company."

Center volunteers are carefully screened by a panel of inmates and prison officials. At the Federal Correctional Institute at Lompoc, Cal., a bank robber is among the participants.

"I like the kids," he says. "And since I'm doing a long sentence, being in the program helps me to keep my mind open to the way things are out there."

Imaginative programs such as these are needed in every field of endeavor in the continuing effort to solve the problems of our society. Set aside some time each day or week for creative thinking.

"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression." (Is. 1:17)

Let us take satisfaction, Lord, in even small successes so we may have hope.

He Skates to Music He Can't Hear

January 10

Is it possible to "feel" music even when you can't hear it? Figure skater David Michalowski of Pork Ridge, Ill., does just that in a sense.

Even though he is deaf he is one of the Midwest's top men skaters. "I don't believe I'm handicapped," he says. "I can move my fingers, I can walk, I can see."

Michalowski skates perfectly in time with music he can't hear. Long hours of hard practice help account for his ability. He has an acute sense of timing. And he tries to comprehend the music in terms of colors.

An art major, Michalowski is leaning toward a career in graphic design. Would he consider joining a professional ice show? "If they ask me," he replies. "It's something I'd like to try."

David Michalowski has the attitude of a winner. We can adopt that attitude too. We may not succeed in just the field we want, but a steady, concentrated approach will bring success in some worthwhile endeavor. Try it.

"You will do many things and will succeed in them." (I Sam. 26:25)

Fill us with Your grace, Father, and with the energy to do Your work in a world in need of it.

How to Improve Family Life

January 11

Family activity is a hallmark of Mormon life. Mormons traditionally set aside Monday nights expressly for that purpose and the idea has been borrowed by the family life commissions of various denominations.

In the Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, the "family time" program is working well. More than 40,000 brochures providing different ideas for each week have been distributed.

As adapted by the archdiocese, participating families choose their own "family night." The main result, sponsors say, is improved family communication. But there have been other benefits too.

One family decided it could do without television. Some fathers have accepted more responsibility around the house. One man rejected a promotion because it would have taken him away from his family more often.

A "family time" discussion led the Donald Kramer family to give Mrs. Kramer's brother and his wife a weekend away from their farm. The Kramers rented a motel for their relatives, moved to the farm themselves and, with their five children, took care of their relatives' children and milked the farm's 40 cows.

Take a look at your own family situation. Perhaps something like a "family night" would be welcomed by everybody, provide more understanding and some memorable experiences.

"Share what you have." (Heb. 13:16)

Father, help me to assess my own family life and take steps to strengthen it.

Long-Distance Rescue

January 12

Michael Davis, a teenage ham radio operator in Torrance, Cal., picked up an SOS signal broadcast by three men in a sinking vessel 75 miles south of Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Michael, 13, got the endangered vessel's correct location and called the Coast Guard in Long Beach, Cal., which informed its station in Miami, Fla.

But Miami couldn't contact the boat because the station had no ham radio gear. So Michael stayed on the air all night, acting as a relay between the ship and the Coast Guard until the sun came up. By that time nearby ham operators took over.

The men were rescued without injury. "The boat was taking on water," said a Coast Guard spokesman, "out of fuel, in danger of sinking. I don't know how he (Michael) knew what to do, but he handled the whole situation by himself with no adult assistance."

Youth has energy and intelligence that grows with practice. Encouragement is the fuel of youthful action.

"Let no one despise your youth." (1 Tim. 4:12)

Stimulate us to respect the abilities of others, Holy Spirit, whether they are young or old—or somewhere in the middle.

They Found a Better Way

January 13

The nearly 300,000 prisoners in the U.S. cost taxpayers about \$3 billion annually—with little to show for it.

For non-violent lawbreakers, some alternatives to imprisonment are being sought through “creative sentencing.” For example:

- A man in Tucson, Ariz., convicted of stealing from Salvation Army drop boxes, was sentenced to work at the local Salvation Army center.

- An 18-year-old first offender from Illinois was put on probation and required to make restitution to the person he had robbed. He found a job and made good on his payments.

- Another youth, 19, accused of burglaries, was known as a good street fighter. He was sentenced to teach boxing to inmates in the county jail.

“Alternative sentencing is probably the most promising area in criminal law,” says Godfrey Isaacs, a Los Angeles trial attorney. “It’s just a better way to handle a difficult situation.”

“Alternative” is an intriguing word. It challenges us to find better ways to do the same thing. How creative are you as a parent, teacher, worker or student? Find the better way.

“Earnestly desire the higher gifts.” (1 Cor. 12:31)

Keep us from getting into mental ruts, Holy Spirit, and enlighten us to find creative alternatives.

Thanks for a Precious Gift

January 14

Joan Horak gave blood 15 years ago to an infant whose own blood was incompatible with her mother's. A medical staff coordinator at Clara Maass Hospital in Belleville, N.J., Mrs. Horak is a regular donor.

One day a red-headed teenage volunteer knocked on Mrs. Horak's office door.

"Do you remember giving blood on a holiday weekend 15 years ago to help a sick baby," the girl asked hesitantly. After a moment's thought, Mrs. Horak said, "yes."

"Well," said Maureen Weir with a grin, "I'm that baby."

Maureen's mother had kept a list of all who donated blood for her daughter, hoping someday to thank them.

"I was really thrilled," exclaimed Mrs. Horak later. "It's wonderful to have this pretty and obviously healthy youngster come by to say, 'thanks'."

Chances are, nobody will personally express gratitude for any blood you may donate. But it's worth doing. You can save a life, or help restore somebody's health, through a half hour or so spent at your local blood bank. It is one way of sharing God's gift of life with another.

"He who pursues righteousness and kindness will find life and honor." (Prov. 21:21)

Help us to value Your gifts, Father, and share them freely with our friends and neighbors.

Church-Goers Critique Pastor

January 15

The First Congregational Church in Stamford, Conn., dates back to 1635, but the Rev. Gabe Campbell, its pastor, has brought parishioners into the computer age.

After the Sunday service, members of the small congregation get a chance to provide feedback on the sermon. For this, while having coffee and a bun, they punch their reactions into computer terminals linked to a console.

On one occasion, they were asked: "Do you believe God has a mission for you?" The console flashed 15 "yesses" and one "no."

Mr. Campbell, a gregarious midwesterner, has found the computer to be one way of starting conversations on religious subjects with his congregation.

Everyone engaged in communication—teachers, parents, discussion leaders, speakers, journalists—needs some way of knowing if the intended message is getting through. If we really want to know what people think, ways can be found to encourage feedback.

"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt." (Col. 4:6)

Give us such respect for the communication process, Lord, that we value the receiving as much as the giving.

Friends Share Grief

January 16

It is difficult to comfort parents who have lost a child and no one knows this better than the parents themselves. Some of them now meet regularly to help each other bear up under the untimely deaths of their sons and daughters.

Their chapters are called Compassionate Friends, a movement started by a clergyman in Coventry, England, ten years ago. Now there are more than 100 chapters in the United States.

One such group was started by Ami Opat and Esther Ehrenberg. Mrs. Opat lost her son at 20 to a congenital heart defect. Mrs. Ehrenberg's son killed himself at 24.

The bereaved parents help each other talk through feelings of guilt, depression and anger in a way that leads at least some of them to acceptance. They learn that they are not alone, that others have had the same shattering experience and come to terms with their grief.

Whatever our sorrow, life must go on. Friends who truly care can help us make it through the day. God's unlimited compassion can touch others through us.

"So faith, hope, love abide . . . but the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13)

Holy Spirit, help us show our concern for others in actions as well as words.

Common Sense Versus Stress

January 17

If we learn how to handle stress it can prolong life and make it a lot pleasanter.

Two psychologists, Robert Woolfolk and Frank Richardson, give tips on handling tension in their book, "Stress, Sanity and Survival":

- Learn to plan. Disorganization can breed stress.
- Recognize and accept limits. We can never be perfect and often have a sense of failure or inadequacy.
- Be a positive person. Focus on the good qualities those around you possess.
- Learn to tolerate and forgive.
- Avoid unnecessary competition.
- Have fun. Find pastimes that are enjoyable to you.
- Get regular physical exercise and learn how to relax.
- Talk out your troubles. Expressing your bottled-up tension can be incredibly helpful.

These rules are just common sense. Common sense is one of the greatest human assets. Use it when you face a problem and when there is a question of your rights or of others' rights.

**"Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down,
but a good word makes him glad." (Prov.
12:25)**

*Lord, make us instruments of Your peace
in a world riven by conflict.*

Few Takers for Alcohol Programs

January 18

Fewer than 80 of the top 500 U.S. companies have alcohol rehabilitation programs, according to an article by Leon B. Sager in the CLU Journal, a trade publication for insurance brokers.

"A significant but hidden 'reason' for lack of alcohol programs at corporations," wrote Sager, "is that many corporate heads are problem drinkers and a corporate program would involve them."

Sager's investigation and other studies uncovered these additional reasons: belief that the company has no right to interfere in employees' personal problems; a feeling that the company has few problem drinkers; belief that the stockholders' money should not be spent for such programs and that it's really the government's responsibility anyway.

All of us are tempted at times to devise elaborate defenses for what we do or fail to do. We tend to give every reason but the true one, because the reality hurts.

It takes courage to face reality sometimes. But doing so can result in the decision to seek help and take the first steps leading to a healing of body, mind and spirit. Pray for God's grace to face facts and accept the consequences.

"Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may walk in Your Truth." (Ps. 86:11)

Inspire us to become more straightforward in our thinking, Holy Spirit, and more honest in action.

Behind the Prosperity of Costa Rica

January 19

One country in Central America that doesn't suffer from wide gaps between rich and poor is Costa Rica.

"The reason is very simple," says Rodrigo Carazo, president of the nation of two million. "We don't waste money on weapons, so we have resources for other things. The needs of our people come first."

One of the few countries in the world that has constitutionally banned an army, Costa Rica has a police force of 6,000. Money not spent on arms goes for education (30 percent of the national budget) and a state-run system of medicine and social security. School attendance has been compulsory for a century.

Per capita income is among the highest in Latin America, and it is the most evenly distributed.

In addition, says Russell Train, head of the World Wildlife Fund, "Costa Rica has done more for conservation than any other Latin American country." It has 22 national parks, forest reserves and protected areas—12 percent of its land area.

Good things happen when a nation turns away from the weapons of war to the works of peace. Social justice and prosperity begin to flourish. Citizens' rights are respected. And nature itself, which God intended for all, can serve the needs of its people.

"For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19)

As stewards of Your creation, Father, spur us to adorn the whole world by following Your precepts of peace.

Worker Stems Oil Blaze

January 20

A major oil depot blaze burned out of control despite the efforts of 200 New York City firemen until Anthony Mancini, 61, shut off the valve that was fueling the conflagration.

Mancini, who had worked at the depot since World War II, knew just what to do. He knew too that it could have cost him his life.

"It was an incredible act of courage," said one firefighter. Mancini suffered burns on his thighs as he straddled the fire-heated pipes while shutting off the valve.

Mancini's wife was upset that he took such a risk. Later he explained, "We all have to die. If you're afraid to die, there's no challenge."

He added: "I was only using common sense, trying to do the best I could."

Because one man knew what to do and was unafraid to act, a disaster was contained. Life itself is a challenge God will help us to meet if we have the courage to act on the basis of knowledge and common sense.

**"In my distress I called upon the Lord."
(Ps. 18:6)**

Give us the resourcefulness, skill and backbone we need, Lord, when surrounded by perils.

Minister to a World of Silence

January 21

If you were deaf and had to be rushed to the emergency room of a hospital alone, how would you give medical personnel vital information about yourself or your condition?

This is a problem that faces millions of hearing-impaired people throughout the country—nearly 500,000 people in the New York area alone.

With the help of Richard Russo, a deacon in the Catholic Church, Cabrini Medical Center in New York City is taking the lead in meeting the needs of the deaf.

More than 40 employees have completed a course to give them skills in such communication as sign language and finger spelling. In addition, Cabrini hired deaf persons for its staff.

“The deaf have traditionally stayed away from health settings,” explains Deacon Russo, who has worked with hearing-impaired for ten years. “Experience has taught them that most people do not understand their special methods of communication . . . Their needs are not heard.”

A “deacon” is one who serves. Each of us can take part in ministry ourselves by finding ways to discover the problems of those who have been overlooked. And by taking steps to see to it that all God’s children get a hearing—and the help they need.

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights.” (Is. 42:1)

We are all called to be the Father’s servants, Jesus. Help us to align ourselves with Your ministry of love.

Fire Heroes Also Shed Tears

January 22

How does a firefighter feel when his attempts to rescue someone from a burning building end in failure?

"We're not tough guys," says Fire Captain Ronald Fitzpatrick. "We're human beings like anybody else. Many a time I've shed a tear when I got back to the firehouse."

Capt. Fitzpatrick, a 20-year veteran who has participated in many rescues, received the Schlitz Award for Valor for entering a blazing three-story house and saving a man trapped in a smoke-thickened room.

With other firemen, he later visited the rescued man in the hospital. The man's tribute was simple and to the point. "Thank God for you fellows," he said.

Do we ever thank God for the public servants who conscientiously carry out their duties to protect our lives? Do we ever personally thank them for what they do?

It's not that they fulfill their mission in order to be thanked. But showing gratitude is the least we can do to recognize their contribution to our safety.

"It is good to give thanks to the Lord." (Ps. 92:1)

Teach us to be thankful, Lord, by word and action for those who protect our welfare day and night.

How to Save a Precious Metal

January 23

Combined, the catalytic converters in some 60 million late-model cars contain about 100 tons of the precious platinum group of metals. Most of the platinum—less than a 10th of an ounce—is lost when the cars are scrapped.

Nearly all the platinum must be imported, at a cost of more than \$275 million a year. If a way could be found to recover the metal, the total would be worth \$1 billion.

Gemini Industries of Santa Ana, Cal., has come up with a partial answer. It buys the converters from scrap dealers for resale to car manufacturers.

“Looking five or six years ahead,” says Gemini’s president Sebastian Musco, “we think we can recover 50 or 60 percent of the metals the industry will need to put into new converters each year.”

Both economics and the wise use of resources demand that we don’t waste the precious materials the Creator has put into the earth. Do you use your resources carefully and encourage others to do so?

**“Turn in the account of your stewardship.”
(Luke 16:2)**

Inspire us to be good stewards of the abundance of Your creation, Holy Spirit.

A New Kind of "Coloring" Book

January 24

Two art teachers have come up with what they call "The Anti-Coloring Book." It's based on their belief that traditional coloring books stifle the imagination of children because all they ask the child to do is fill in.

In their book, Susan Striker and Edward Kimmel try to stimulate second graders by provocative questions and incomplete drawings which the youngsters are expected to finish.

There are questions such as: "What do you think God looks like?" "Write a letter to the person you like (or hate) most in the world. Use pictures instead of words wherever possible." "If you could call anyone in the world, who would it be?"

Some of the drawings contain nothing more than a squiggly line. The child must do the rest.

Young children need a lot of "opening up" if their God-given imaginations are to have full scope. Parents and teachers should encourage a youngster's insights to take wing.

Adult life has plenty of rules. Childhood is a time for dreams. Children need encouragement to give form to those dreams.

"I speak as to children—widen your hearts also." (2 Cor. 6:13)

Lighten our hearts, Jesus, so that we can give a lift to the spirits of youth.

Artist Beautifies Ugly Cities

January 25

Do you think that “visual pollution” is making the world an ugly place? Victor Vasarley of France does, and he’s doing something about it.

The 62-year-old artist has “banished the word art” from his vocabulary and is trying to make the world more aesthetically pleasing. He advocates an interdisciplinary approach to a new system of planning that would halt the spread of global ugliness.

“I realize my limitations,” said the Hungarian-born visionary who has developed ideas for beautifying city landscapes without pulling anything down.

“One person can’t change everything, so I have focused on one aspect of the urban development, which is the form of buildings and the use of color.”

Vasarley has also established a foundation and a museum in southern France to demonstrate how color and form can actually transform ugly structures into pleasing ones.

You and I have our limitations too. But that is no reason for us to stop trying to add the spice of truth, beauty and goodness to ordinary life.

“For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator.” (Wis. 13:5)

Prod us, Father, to fan the spark of creative energy You have given us.

Stargazer Finds a Comet

January 26

Would you like to have a comet named after you? Don Machholtz had that wish. The 25-year-old stargazer finally succeeded, but it took him 1,700 hours of comet hunting before his perseverance paid off.

"I was so excited when I found it," said the California man, "because I was familiar with that part of the sky, and I knew it shouldn't have been there."

Machholtz became interested in astronomy at 13 and began his pursuit of a new comet in earnest in 1974. Comets are the only celestial bodies named after the discoverer. Half the comets found each year—and there are about a dozen—are the result of stargazing by amateurs.

"At first," said Machholtz, "my goal was to find a comet and have it named after me. But later it was thrilling just to study the sky, and I no longer felt disappointment when I didn't see anything new."

The true amateur—the word means "lover"—takes joy in the action itself, and not in the reward. Each of us can be an amateur, finding delight in loving service to the people God has called us to serve.

"The glory of the stars is the beauty of heaven, a gleaming array in the heights of the Lord." (Sir. 43:9)

Inspire us, Jesus, to find happiness in what we do for others.

Some Thrills Carry No Risks

January 27

Why do some people become skydivers, or go hang-gliding, or risk their lives in racing cars?

Prof. Bruce Ogilvie of California State University in San Jose studied 250 risk-takers in depth. In his view, "Individuals who plunge from airplanes or push a racing car to the limit aren't crazy, they are fighting boredom."

Prof. Ogilvie admits that such sensation-seeking can be destructive. But his study indicates that often such persons have a very low level of anxiety and a high degree of emotional control.

"They have a periodic need," he says, "for extending themselves to the absolute physical, emotional and intellectual limits in order to escape from the tensionless state associated with everyday living."

Life could also be more exciting if we took a greater interest in helping other people, in serving their needs instead of just our own. It can be as big a thrill to see happy surprise on the face of a child as it is to soar through the air on a hang-glider.

**"It is more blessed to give than to receive."
(Acts 20:35)**

Endow us with the insight, Jesus, to discover the joy that comes from putting happiness into the lives of others.

The Toothbrushes Came Alive

January 28

An Australian mother took a creative approach to the effort to get her five-year-old son to use his toothbrush.

"He refused to clean his teeth," she told an interviewer. "Being a writer, I felt there had to be an easier way than thumping him. In a moment of sheer frustration, I wrote the first Toothbrush Family story."

Her stories grew in number and Marcia Hatfield developed a television cartoon series about a family of toothbrushes that come alive after the human family goes to sleep.

Her characters include Hot-Rod Harry the electric toothbrush, the dashing Flash Flouride, and Gramps, the toothbrush whose soft bristles are well preserved.

The films have been televised in Europe, Japan, Australia and on Captain Kangaroo in the United States.

Mrs. Hatfield avoids "the heavy hard sell," preferring to entertain rather than preach. She feels that would turn children off.

One woman solved a family problem in a way that has affected millions. What one person can do, so can others.

"Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you." (Acts 18: 9-10)

Help us to develop our creativity, Father.

Long Name Changed His Life

January 29

What's in a name? Plenty, if it happens to be Oliver William Twisleton-Wykeham-Fiennes. It changed the life of one man who bore that triple surname.

Shortly after World War II, Oliver, 19, was a subaltern aboard a crowded British troopship. He was mistakenly awarded a three-berth cabin—one for each of his surnames. He went out to find two other people to share his cabin with.

One of his cabin mates turned out to be an Anglican Franciscan friar. Their conversations changed young Oliver's life. He entered the church, took holy orders and eventually became the Dean of Lincoln Cathedral in Sydney, Australia.

"The name's a help, really," the soft-spoken English cleric claims. "Some people think it's a joke and become inquisitive. This means you can talk to people." He prefers to be addressed as Dean Fiennes.

Whatever the length or origin of the name we bear, each of us has an identity given to no other. Each of us has a role in life God has assigned to us alone. Each of us is unique and, in some way, irreplaceable. It helps to think of that when things get us down.

"May my life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and may He deliver me out of all tribulation." (1 Sam. 26:24)

Help us, Lord, in our struggles to establish ourselves as individuals.

Woman Heads Men's Jail

January 30

Gloria Lee has an unusual, perhaps unique, job for a woman. She is warden of the Bronx House of Detention, which houses 500 men accused of felonies such as robbery and murder.

A veteran of 23 years in the New York City penal system, Warden Lee moves freely among inmates, hearing and acting on their complaints.

"She's willing to listen," said another officer, "but if someone is wrong, she'll tell him. She will not be intimidated."

Her philosophy? "Inmates are people. They are human beings; they should be treated as humanely as possible."

She also believes that "we need to provide more support for the inmate after he's left the institution," if we really want to reach the goal of rehabilitation.

It takes an unusual person to preserve a sense of humanity in a threatening situation. Yet it works like nothing else. Encourage people such as Gloria Lee to enter public service.

"He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2 Cor. 9:6)

Lord, inspire good people to serve you by serving those whose needs are greatest.

How to Predict a Snowstorm

January 31

You can tell when a snowstorm is coming by looking for natural weather signs, according to William E. Osgood, author of the book, *Wintering in Snow Country*. Here are some things to watch for:

1. A red sky at sunrise that changes quickly to lemon yellow.

2. A halo around the sun or moon, caused by snow crystals in the atmosphere.

3. The hunger of birds. Birds know snow is on the way and they try to eat all they can before it starts falling.

4. A shivery cold feeling. This is caused by the high humidity that usually precedes a storm.

5. Sounds. They carry very distinctly and can be heard long distances just before a storm.

Jesus once told His hearers that they could read the signs of an approaching storm in the sky but could not understand the signs of the times—that God's judgment was coming. He reminded them that each of us is accountable for the way we live our lives.

Our accountability need not fill us with fear. If we have tried to serve others with love, joy awaits us.

“You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.” (Mt. 16:3)

Give us insight into your ways, Father, just as we are able to comprehend earthly realities.

English Couple Pedals Cross Country

February 1

Bert and Queenie Barnes of Norfolk, England, celebrated their retirement by bicycling 4,000 miles across the United States in 85 days. They averaged 45 miles a day.

Going from west to east to have the prevailing winds at their backs, the former hospital porter, 67, and his wife, an office worker, 62, did it all on \$9 a day.

Both had cycled all their lives. They prepared for the journey by cycling all around England and Norway. Why did they do it? "I saw so much of people retiring and fading away," said Barnes.

"Coming through the little townships, we thought, 'This is the real America,' Barnes added. People took them in and proudly showed them the local sights.

"We never met a bad American," said Mrs. Barnes, smiling. "There must be some, but we didn't meet any."

Some people retire from life at an early age. Others go on active to the end. Much of the difference lies in attitude.

You don't have to ride a bike to be active. You don't even have to be in good health. What is required is a desire to reach out, to touch another's life in some positive way.

"Reach out and give to him as much as you can." (Sir. 14:13)

Help us, Lord, to look up, not down in all we say and do.

Some Trees Have "Anti-Freeze"

February 2

Some trees survive cold weather better than others because they have a built-in "anti-freeze," according to Greg Brown, a forestry professor at the University of Missouri.

The black locust tree, for example, survives harsh winters better than hickories, black walnuts and cottonwoods.

Prof. Brown has isolated a substance in the black locust called glycoprotein, which keeps ice out of the plant's cells. It also has a membrane which allows water to move out of the cells more quickly, preventing the formation of ice.

"It's the formation of ice that kills the cells," he says. What he calls anti-freeze is actually "mechanisms which tend to keep ice crystals from forming."

The aim of Prof. Brown's research is to find ways to protect trees from late fall and early spring freezings. If he is successful it could save nurseries millions of dollars each year.

Scientific research is one way of tracing God's handiwork in the tiniest atoms or cells and in the magnificent reaches of the heavens.

"I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have established." (Ps. 8:3)

Do not leave us unmoved, Lord, by the contemplation of Your wisdom and goodness in all that You have created.

Turning Walls Into Bridges

February 3

Homosexuality and death, in that order, are at the top of the list of subjects parents find difficult to discuss with their children.

The American Family Report, "Raising Children in a Changing Society," published by General Mills, Inc., lists the results of questions put to 1,230 families with children under 13 years of age.

So-called "new breed" parents put "death" first and "traditionalist" parents list "homosexuality" as most difficult. The remaining subjects, listed in order of difficulty for all parents, are: sex, family problems, own shortcomings, money, own feelings, smoking, illegal drugs, drinking, religion, sickness.

God gave some of us the role of parents. He will surely be with us as we overcome hurdles in speaking to our children in important areas.

In doing so, we overcome the guesswork, misunderstanding and ignorance which can handicap a youngster. We help them mature. At the same time, we might find that we are drawn closer to one another within the family.

"Speak and teach rightly." (Luke 20:21)

Strengthen the faith, Father, of parents who feel alone and sometimes unsure in their role.

Police Hearing Avoids Court Cases

February 4

Participation in an informal hearing instead of going to court has proven to be an effective way of resolving many family and neighborly disputes in Middlesex County, N.J.

The program, called Citizens Dispute Settlement, diverted 1,300 cases from the municipal courts in a year. About 94 percent of the disputes were resolved satisfactorily.

"The program gives people a chance to communicate with each other about their problems," says Municipal Court Judge Thomas Shamy, "and that's something that's been lacking."

Operating outside the strict legal rules of evidence, the program enables people to tell their grievances in a more complete manner. The hearing is conducted at police headquarters rather than in court.

Many conflicts can be taken care of when a skilled third party helps people find areas of agreement and encourages them to build on them. If we seek to live in peace with others, the God of peace will help us find a way.

"Be at peace with one another." (Mark 9:50)

Broaden our outlook, Father, so we can see the validity of the other person's point of view.

Intake of Junk Food

February 5

Lora Brown, a nutrition teacher at Brigham Young University in Utah, decided to do something about student consumption of "junk food." She posted signs with the nutritional content of each item on campus vending machines.

Over a two-month period, there was a significant gain in the sale of the more nutritious foods, such as milk, sandwiches, yogurt, fruits and juices. The collegians bought less candy, cookies, sweet rolls and cupcakes.

Most of us eat more sugar and less natural substances than are good for us. Children especially need guidance in their eating habits. While parents won't win popularity contests by insisting on what is good for their children, it pays off in better health.

There are other things for parents to stress too—like cooperation, generosity, truth, honesty and love. To communicate such values, parents have to live by them. They need all the help they can get.

"Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live." (Prov. 4:4)

Give parents what they need, Father, to carry out the role You have set for them in life.

The Missing Ingredient: Love

February 6

Constancy and love are the tools used by an Israeli doctor to help severely disturbed children regain their sense of wholeness.

At the children's home where the psychoanalyst has worked for nearly 20 years, the recovery rate is an astonishing 70 percent.

Years ago, the B'nai B'rith Women Children's Home assisted children of the Holocaust. Now it is more likely to treat battered children.

"Holding (a child) is important," says Dr. Yecheskiel Cohen. "Even holding very strongly. It's very positive for the child—that and constancy. It is so important for the same person to be with them. It comes down to trust."

No behavioral drugs are used in the B'nai B'rith home. Drugs treat symptoms rather than causes and, Dr. Cohen believes, might tempt the worker to stop relating to the child.

Institutions easily lose sight of the fact that children are to be treated as they are in the best families—with a love that is dependable and unqualified.

**"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
(Mark 12:31)**

Remind us, Father, that the best place to practice the Golden Rule is in the home.

Pilot's Crash Story Upheld

February 7

Back in 1957, Lt. David Steeves survived a 54-day ordeal after the T-33 jet trainer he was flying crashed in an inaccessible mountain area in California.

For a month he was treated as a hero. Then doubts began to arise about the authenticity of his story. The Saturday Evening Post cancelled a \$10,000 story contract, and Life magazine ran an article raising suspicions about what actually happened.

Lt. Steeves' own personality didn't help. He was described as proud and stubborn, with a history of family problems. He was demoted and eventually left the Air Force. Death came when, as a private pilot, he crashed in 1965. Vindication came for David Steeves in 1977 when Boy Scouts came across the canopy of his airplane.

"It's a miracle," said a friend, who knew of the dead flier's vigorous efforts to prove his story. "He fought so hard to vindicate himself."

It is said that truth will out. Sometimes though it comes too late for us to benefit by it. In this instance, however, it proved to be a great consolation to members of his family reminding us of the value of upholding the truth as we know it.

"Send out Your light and Your truth; let them lead me." (Ps. 43:3)

Lord, inspire us with the courage to speak truthfully and act honorably.

Home Poisonings: Down but Not Out

February 8

First the good news: since the introduction of "child-proof" caps on medicines and household products in 1973, aspirin poisoning of children under five has been cut in half.

Now for the bad news: a quarter of a million children under five are accidentally poisoned by substances such as furniture polish, detergents, aspirin, poisonous plants, perfume and the like. More care is obviously needed. Here are some ideas:

- Choose products with child-resistant containers.
- Lock up all medicines.
- Keep household cleaners out of the reach of children.
- Keep poisons in original containers.
- Don't remove warning labels or labels containing information on treatment.
- Have the phone number of your local poison control center handy.

Precautions take time, but they are no luxury. Looking ahead can head off trouble. Parents must be alert to all sorts of possible problems. If you see a potentially dangerous substance within reach of small children at home, act to correct the situation.

"Accept instruction that you may gain wisdom for the future." (Prov. 19:20)

Jesus, spur us to take thought before trouble occurs.

Doctor Advocates "Human Touch"

February 9

Dr. Lena Edwards, 79, has earned the right to speak out. As a young physician, she set up a hospital for migrant workers in the Texas Panhandle. For more than 40 years, the black physician practiced medicine among the poor in Jersey City and sent all six of her children—two of whom are now doctors—through college.

So, when she says that too many doctors haven't the courage or the time to talk honestly with their cancer patients, people have to listen.

When Dr. Edwards received the highest state award from the American Cancer Society, she told her audience: "Many physicians are very insecure themselves, people who run away from unpleasant situations rather than face up to them."

Her advice: "Express concern, tell the patient the problem and inform him he must learn to live with it, as everything possible is done for recovery.

"We must bring back the humanity of medicine," said Dr. Edwards. "Everything is too impersonal now."

Do you apply the "personal touch" in all you do? As a parent, a teacher, a social worker, a friend, do you make the effort to express concern for those who need it? God will bless, personally, those who do.

"There are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord." (1 Cor. 12:4)

Lift up our eyes, Holy Spirit, so we may see the little ways in which we can show that we care.

Hope for Accident Victims

February 10

Tests with animals have given rise to hope that someday medical science may be able to repair severely injured spinal columns and prevent the paralysis that now results from many accidents.

Dr. Carl C. Kao of Georgetown University has conducted tests on dogs with broken spinal cords. In some cases, after two months, they could walk again.

"The spinal cord is as soft as a piece of jello," Dr. Kao explains, "and there's no way you can put a stitch on one end and the other and bring them together." He has found a way to use nerves from other parts of the body to bridge the gap between severely injured parts.

"Somebody who breaks his neck in an automobile accident could possibly be helped by this," says Dr. Kao, "but it will be several years at least before we are ready to use it on humans."

People are alive and well today who would not have survived had they been injured or sick 20 years ago. Scientific knowledge has brought us the terror of atomic destruction. It has also given us miracles of healing.

"He bestowed knowledge upon them, and allotted to them the law of life." (Sir. 17:11)

Holy Spirit, inspire researchers to find ways to make life better for those who suffer.

Runaway Returns Home Safe

February 11

Wendell Marthers ran away from home five years ago, thinking he would find "movie stars, glamour and beach boys." What the 11-year-old boy from Gettysburg, Pa., discovered was "pretty close to hell."

Wendell, now reunited with his family, headed for the Canadian border, but was turned back and journeyed across the northern United States until he reached Oregon, then turned south to California.

He now admits: "I was scared just about every day I was gone, worrying about being arrested, about being killed or beaten up." And he was beaten up—six times.

The youth decided to come home when he saw the loving relationships in a California family that took him in.

"It's kind of a shame when a person has to leave home for five years to learn he appreciates his own family," the young man now admits.

Not many youthful runaways are so lucky. Many become enmeshed in the lucrative and exploitive sex industry in New York and elsewhere. So we can feel with Mrs. Helen Marthers, Wendell's mother, who said: "I'll thank God for the rest of my life."

"He has led me back to you safely." (Tob. 12:3)

Lord, watch over homeless and runaway children who have nowhere to lay their heads tonight.

Monastery Raises Dogs

February 12

A group of Franciscan friars support themselves on 376 acres of eroded land in upstate New York by raising and training dogs.

Under the direction of Father Lawrence Mancuso, the 13 friars of New Skete Monastery have sold some 300 dogs in the past 10 years and trained another 400. They raise only German shepherds, but will train any breed of dog.

A few of the dogs have been used to sniff out narcotics or to detect bombs for law enforcement authorities. But most have been sold to private individuals because the monks wish to produce a gentle pet.

Says Father Lawrence, "Monasteries throughout history are known for quality things."

There is a connection between prayer and contemplation and quality work. The quality of our own work should be a reflection of the depth of our faith and intensity of our love.

God does not make junk. And the Creator expects good workmanship from us too.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." (Eph. 2:10)

Teach us, Creator, to take care in our work so it will be known for its quality.

Paying Sam Back

February 13

One of the hottest attractions on late-night radio in the East is a 62-year-old man whose voice is ordinary enough to belong to your Uncle Horace and whose advice ranges from marriage problems to home repairs.

Bernard Meltzer of WOR has a warm, blunt and frankly spiritual approach to life's problems. Those who call him for advice often wait an hour to get on the air. —

Meltzer has expertise in 12 different fields. He says his career at the City College of New York was saved by a \$100 book loan he accepted in desperation from an unsuccessful lawyer named Sam.

The lawyer told him: "I want no interest. You're not going to pay me back in money. But when anybody needs help, you're going to help him, and you're going to say to yourself, 'I'm paying Sam back.' "

Almost 200,000 people hear Bernard Meltzer sign off each night with: "May the light of the Lord guide you, and keep you in the palm of His hand. God keep you. Good night."

He's still paying Sam back.

**"Let not your hand be extended to receive,
but withdrawn when it is time to repay."
(Sir. 4:31)**

*Father, help us to become ready listeners,
willing to help whenever we can.*

Marriage Stands Test of Time

February 14

The groom's mother didn't attend the wedding because she thought the two 19-year-olds were too young to marry. That was in 1899, and Noah and Mary Barnett are still married—and still very much in love.

"She was the prettiest girl I ever saw," says Barnett, who recalls that "her hair was braided and hung down to her waist."

The Barnetts, both nearly 100, have lived on a 40-acre farm in Tomahawk, Ark. since 1907. They have five children, ranging in age from 66 to 78.

Noah Barnett says he's been in love with Mary since they were five. "She just kept getting prettier all the time," he told an interviewer. "Even now she is pretty. Not to you, I suppose. But to me she is."

Love is something you give as well as look for. Affection needs to be nourished. If sincere, the phrase "I love you" never wears out.

God's love for us is proclaimed with each sunrise, with its promise of another chance. We can be extensions of His love if we freely give it, in word and action, to our "loved ones."

"Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us." (Eph. 5:2)

Don't let us withhold our affection, Jesus, from those to whom we owe it.

Clue in Novel Saves a Life

February 15

A nurse who was reading Agatha Christie's novel, "The Pale Horse," found a clue that saved the life of a 19-month-old girl dying of a condition that baffled doctors.

The baby had been flown from Qatar on the Persian Gulf to a hospital in London. Despite intensive efforts, her blood pressure rose, breathing was labored and death seemed near.

Then nurse Marsha Maitland suggested that the infant may have been poisoned by thallium, a metal that has poisonous salts. She said she had been reading the Christie novel and that the baby's symptoms were strikingly similar to those of a thallium case in the book.

Scotland Yard found a laboratory with the equipment to test for thallium poisoning. The existence of thallium was confirmed and the baby recovered after receiving the proper treatment.

That nurse could have shrugged off her hunch or she might have been ignored by the doctors on the case. But everybody cooperated and a life was saved.

Are your instincts sound? Do you trust them? Do you make that extra effort, with God's help, to help those in need?

"Trust in the Lord and do good." (Ps. 37:3)

Never let us hold back, Spirit of God, when our words or actions might be just what is needed to help someone.

Climb the Highest Mountain

February 16

Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to climb Mount Everest, once told an interviewer that the greatest explorers were frequently motivated, not by confidence, but by fear.

"They can often perform better as a consequence," he said. "If you're absolutely sure you'll be successful, why bother starting? Maybe you're doing something that's a bit too easy for you."

To reinforce his point, Sir Edmund expressed the opinion that his own talents are rather modest. "But," he added, "having a certain amount of stubbornness and a vigorous strength, I was able to get by on many of these projects . . . I just wanted to go ahead and do certain things, so I went ahead and did them."

Besides climbing Everest, Hillary also made a dog-sled trip across the Antarctic and a 1,500-mile journey up the Ganges River in India.

There are limits to what stubborn determination can achieve. But few of us reach them. Sometimes we fail because we give up too soon.

Set high goals. Sprinkle stubbornness with common sense. Pray to God for guidance. And then climb your mountain.

**"Before the mountains were brought forth
. . . from everlasting to everlasting You are
God." (Ps. 90:2)**

*Instill in us a spirit of adventure for high
achievement, Lord.*

Medical Information by Phone

February 17

Free health information by telephone is one of the services provided by John Muir Hospital in Walnut Creek, Cal.

In six months, more than 40,000 calls were answered. The system relies on 278 cassettes, three to seven minutes in length, with general information on many diseases or such matters as care of the newborn or treatment of dandruff.

Called Tel-Med, the system was devised by a San Bernadino businessman. A caller simply tells a volunteer which subject he or she is interested in, and the operator plays the appropriate tape.

"It's been extremely popular with the public," says a hospital official. "But we stress that tapes are not intended to be used in emergencies. They are only for general information. And the tapes discourage self-diagnosis."

As medical costs keep going up, there is greater need for preventive and educational programs for the public. Do you take reasonable steps to safeguard the divine gift of life? An ounce of prevention is a lot better than a costly cure.

"I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in health." (3 John 1:2)

Keep us from becoming hypochondriacs, Lord, but give us a sane regard for our good health and that of loved ones.

Water-Cutoff Threat Brings Payments

February 18

Many of the 400 residents in Mount Vernon, N.Y., lost no time in paying their water bills when they heard that the city would cut off the water supply of people with overdue payments.

"We had long lines all day long," said Water Commissioner David A. Ford. "We worked the computer overtime."

The city took in \$15,000 from the delinquent customers, about twice the amount normally collected in any given day.

Although Ford insisted that he never really planned a massive shutdown of the water supply, as had been widely reported, the suggestion was apparently enough to inspire a large number of people to pay their overdue bills.

If honesty "takes a holiday," we all stand to lose. Are you quick to demand your rights from others and slow to pay them their due?

Whether it's giving what we owe to an individual or to the government, honesty must prevail. God has made us dependent on one another in such a way that failure to honor one commitment can upset our relationships with many people.

"An upright man considers his ways." (Prov. 21:29)

Lord, help us strive harder for integrity and honesty in all our dealings.

Midwives Being Used Again

February 19

A once-discarded health role—that of the midwife—is once again gaining acceptance from the nation's medical schools.

Throughout the country, there are now at least 2,500 nurse midwives who offer prenatal and postnatal services to pregnant women as well as attending at childbirth.

"Because they don't regard pregnancy as an illness," said one woman planning to use a midwife, "they are very receptive to parents' wishes to deliver children by natural childbirth and to have the father and other family members present during the delivery."

While some barriers remain, most states license midwives. "The midwife is an expert in normal pregnancy and the physician is an expert in the high-risk patient," explains Dorothea Lang, director of midwifery services in New York City. "If the patient develops a problem, the midwife knows the doctor is there to help her and the patient."

The women's movement and the feeling that extensive use of drugs and other obstetrical practices have dehumanized childbirth have led to the return of the midwife. Properly trained, she can restore the joy and the wonder to the way we experience God's gift of human life.

**"You did form my inward parts, you did knit me together in my mother's womb."
(Ps. 139:13)**

Lord, inspire us to strive for the return of the human element in every aspect of modern life.

Good Neighbors Cut Crime Rate

February 20

A tidal wave of burglaries swept over the Whispering Oaks section of Austin, Tex., a few years ago until policeman George Vanderhule did something about it.

The section was being hit by 35 major offenses a month—burglaries, vandalism, sexual assaults on adults and children.

Officer Vanderhule found that the residents were strangers to each other. "Nobody knew anybody else."

Added to that, there were too many bushy trees, high privacy fences and places to hide. In five meetings with concerned residents, he showed them how to use light and noise to make it harder for criminals to break in.

"If your neighborhood criminal can't enter your home in four minutes," said the officer, "he'll give up the attempt. Crime dropped in Whispering Oaks by nearly 75 percent over a two-month period.

Knowing your neighbors is good for a lot more than the prevention of crime. It's a chance to make friends—to be a friend.

"Better a friend near than a brother far away." (Prov. 27:10)

*Keep us from being narrow in our concerns,
Father, so we will have friends in time of
need.*

Perseverance Pays Off

February 21

Mary Stevens, a public school teacher in Harlem, was discouraged. She decided to change her job. Then something happened.

For years, under trying conditions, she had been teaching problem children. Her dedication did not seem to produce any results. As she seriously considered a change in her career, she tried a little harder. Finally, her efforts were rewarded.

Half of the children who came to her were illiterate. She strove to make them believe they were not losers. She encouraged them to overcome their depressive environment, and taught them the value of education.

The children responded, and in two years time they were transformed. They could read at their grade level and had acquired a new outlook on life.

Giving up is the easy way out of problems. But through constant effort, a situation that seems hopeless can be changed for the better. Don't quit! Hang in there, as the saying goes.

**"He who endures to the end will be saved."
(Mt. 10:22)**

Lord Jesus, who persevered to the point of death, give us the courage to keep going in spite of our daily troubles.

Bibles to Russia

February 22

Bengt Sareld, a 33-year-old Swede, is a smuggler for God.

Bibles are rare in the Soviet Union where religious freedom is severely restricted. But among the people there is a great hunger for God.

Bengt Sareld decided to smuggle bibles into Russia. So far, he has made 60 trips, carrying the books in a hollowed-out compartment in his car. On one of his trips, he was arrested and spent five months in jail. He was finally released because of the protests of his Swedish compatriots.

Later, on a speaking tour of the United States, Sareld advised Americans to recognize the power of public opinion to influence Soviet policy.

We are fortunate to live in a country which guarantees our right to worship God in the church of our choice. Let's not take our faith and our freedom for granted. Cherish and guard them both, and see what you can do to help your less privileged brothers.

"Man does not live by bread alone." (Dt. 8:3)

God of our Fathers, help us to be grateful for the freedom to worship You.

Just for Fun

February 23

Playing for fun instead of for winning is the aim of "alternative games" developed by California's "New Games Foundation."

"Boffing," "Human Pinball" and "Tweezli-Whop" are some of the games being introduced in parks to children and adults. As many as 150 grown men and women can have great times pounding and pushing a huge four-foot high "earth ball" to keep it aloft. Girl Scouts stand in circles and bat around a small, feathered "Loco Ball."

The rules of the new games: "Play hard. Play fair. Nobody hurt." The uniform: sweatshirts, jeans, whatever is comfortable.

"In the new games, everyone who plays, wins," says Marcelle Weed, the Oakland, Cal., recreation supervisor. "With most sports, there are 20 players and 20,000 spectators. We want 20,000 players and 20 spectators."

Getting people to participate is a way of caring about them. The aim of recreation should be to enjoy other persons, not to defeat them. We were put on this earth to live and work together. Playing is for fun.

"Have unity of spirit, sympathy, love of the brethren, a tender heart and a humble mind." (1 Pet. 3:8)

Lord, remind me that when I "put down" someone, I lose.

The Wisdom of the Fox

February 24

The story of *The Little Prince*, written by Antoine de Saint Exupery has many charming dialogues. The conversation between the fox and the little prince is a favorite.

"I cannot play with you," the fox said. "I am not tamed."

"What does that mean—'tame'?" asked the prince.

Said the fox, "It means to establish ties. To me you are still nothing more than a little boy who is like a hundred thousand other little boys . . . to you I am nothing more than a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, then we shall need each other. To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you I shall be unique in all the world."

"What must I do to tame you?" asked the little prince.

The fox revealed his secret, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly . . . It is the time you have wasted in taking care of your rose that makes it so important. You become responsible for what you tame."

So much time is spent in hurried activity. The people who need you need your presence, your time spent idly with them. Are you establishing ties with someone?

"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)

Lord, in my haste I am often neglectful of my loved ones. Please give me the wisdom of love.

Upward Mobility

February 25

A New York City mother of ten grown children, and grandmother of five, launched a second career as a telephone installer-repairer.

Susan Conyers had been working as a telephone information operator, but she preferred to meet people rather than listen to their voices. So she took advantage of a program offered by her company, called "Upgrade and Transfer."

She attended classes for two weeks and spent six months training in the field to become a telephone installer-repairer, and at a much better salary.

"I enjoy the freedom of movement," she says, "and meeting all kinds of new people." After years of mothering, Mrs. Conyers was able to move her life in a completely new direction.

"Keep an open mind, and don't pin yourself down," is her advice.

Do you feel you are in a dead-end job? Would you like to work more directly with people? How about following the example of Susan Conyers? All you have to do is try!

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." (Is. 43:19)

God, give me the strength to do what is right.

How to Stop Junk Mail

February 26

In one year, 170 pounds of unsolicited “junk” mail found its way to the mailbox of Mrs. Ruth Pedian of Chicago.

Unlike most people who shrug and sigh—and throw it away—Mrs. Pedian saved everything she received for a year. Catalogues, brochures, solicitations of every sort, magazine subscription offers—she stacked it all in 10-pound bundles and stored it in closets.

Mrs. Pedian called a press conference and showed reporters her 170-pound pile. She said the mound “consists of solicitation-type mail that I didn’t request, and didn’t want and didn’t use, usually didn’t even need to open. What a tremendous waste.”

“How does one protest?” she asked.

There is a way. You can request a form to have your name taken off any and all mailing lists from:

Direct Mail Marketing Association

6 East 43rd St.

New York, NY 10017.

“Arise and be doing! The Lord be with you!” (1 Chr. 22:16)

Help us, Lord, to find ways of taking action when something needs to be done.

Jewelry With a Message

February 27

Pendants and pins reading "Try God" are offered for sale by Tiffany & Co. with proceeds going to the Walter Hoving Home, Inc., in Garrison, N. Y.

Advertisements for Tiffany's on New York's Fifth Ave. state that the pins are a limited edition, that is, "limited to people who believe in God."

The Walter Hoving Home is a non-sectarian center for drug-addicted and seriously troubled girls. Figures have stated that after a year's time, more than 90 per cent of the girls are "permanently cured by accepting God into their lives."

But whether or not you decide to buy the \$10-\$12 jewelry and contribute to the home, it is a good idea to "Try God" anyway.

What could you lose? Nothing.

What could you gain? On earth, peace beyond understanding, and beyond, an eternity of happiness.

Try God.

"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him." (1 Cor. 2:9)

*Lord God, grant us the wisdom to seek
You in the turmoil of this world.*

Working Within the System

February 28

Over two million students in hundreds of cities throughout the country are winning new victories daily by putting legal and political knowledge to work.

Rejecting sit-ins, vandalism and picketing, teenagers in schools in 40 states are taking about 500 legal education courses. Some 50 teacher-training institutes prepare instructors each summer to direct the popular legal courses.

Students in St. Paul, Minn., forced the clean-up of massive industrial wastes. New Jersey students got a traffic signal at a dangerous crossing. Hundreds of similar victories are resulting from teenagers' lobbying, voter registration and petitioning.

"Students want to get more involved," says Jeanne Garvey of California's National Law in a Free Society Project, "More involved in the 'real world.'"

"Getting involved" adds depth to one's life and helps other lives. There are times when protests may be called for, but it is often better to use our talents to improve things while working within the system.

"Fulfill every good resolve and work of faith by His power." (2 Thess. 1:11)

Lord, help me to be a concerned and active citizen.

Test City, U.S.A.

March 1

There are some situations where just being average makes you exceptional. At least that's what happened to a whole city about 10 years ago.

Fort Wayne, Ind., with a population of about 200,000 became the target of researchers who needed a city that would best represent an "average" market for new products.

Since then manufacturers have spent millions in this cloak-and-dagger game. Dozens of test products are brought in each year to see how shoppers will react.

Hundreds of others have reached grocery shelves all around America because they passed the test in Test City, U.S.A.

Manufacturers have learned that planning ahead saves time, money and energy. Just about everyone agrees that planning ahead makes good sense.

Being prepared on the spiritual level makes the best sense of all. The human soul is immortal. Each one of us will one day meet our Maker. In order to be ready tomorrow, plan ahead today.

"Each of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12)

Lord, help me to understand the things of the spirit, so I may live my life as You would have me live it.

Violence, Food Might Be Linked

March 2

Can the food you eat affect your behavior? Some researchers think so.

Persons suffering from hypoglycemia, for example, might do strange things because their brains aren't getting enough blood sugar. Their activity stabilizes when they are placed on a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet.

Food allergies and malnutrition can also lead sometimes to irrational and even violent reactions.

"For an allergic person, eating may lead to beating, biting and battle," says psychologist K. E. Moyer of Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. "While a person who is allergic to pollen suffers a stuffy nose, a person allergic to chocolate or bananas may pass out from bloody noses."

Few of us can blame a candy bar if we become too aggressive. Yet other factors, such as fatigue or fear, might reduce the individual's degree of responsibility.

It's good to keep that in mind when judging others. They may be bothered by something we don't know about.

"Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy each to his brother." (Zech. 7:9)

Make us slow to be critical, Lord, and quick to seek a better understanding of people's behavior.

Turning Waste Into Money

March 3

A group of senior citizens in Bricktown, N. J., has given a dozen college scholarships to local youths. How? They discovered a source of wealth in what people were throwing away.

The average American reads the equivalent of 100 pounds of newspapers each year. Yet, barely 25 percent is being reused. Most of us are blithely tossing out valuable resources that could be changed into dollars.

The American Paper Institute (Paper Stock Conservation Committee, 260 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016) has compiled a "How To" manual on collecting and selling used paper.

Natural resources are not inexhaustible. Recycling is a real contribution to world ecology. God gives us this beautiful earth. We are responsible for the way we use it or abuse it.

Let's honor the Maker by caring for our world.

"For you O Lord, have made me glad by Your work; at the works of Your hands I sing for joy." (Ps. 92:4)

Lord, help us respect the works of Your hands and use them well for Your greater glory.

She Found a Way to Share

March 4

"Loaves and Fishes" is an organization started by Kathleen Di Chiara to relieve hunger among the unseen poor in the affluent town of Summit, N.J.

One of those receiving help is a mother who had nothing but a box of cereal to feed her three children for three days. Others are black, Hispanic, unemployed or elderly people living on a fixed income.

Mrs. Di Chiara got the idea when a parish priest suggested that people give up meat on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent to protest high meat prices. She took it a step further by asking her friends to use the money saved to provide canned goods to the needy in their own community.

Each week parishioners bring canned goods to Sunday services. Hundreds of families in Summit and surrounding communities have benefited. Many come back a few months later with bags of groceries for other people.

Jesus' multiplication of the loaves and fishes was a mystery of love, not an act of magic. We carry on His work most perfectly when we search out those in need.

**"And taking the five loaves and the two fish
He looked up to Heaven, and blessed and
broke them, and gave them to the disciples
to set before the crowd. And all ate and
were satisfied." (Luke 9:16-17)**

*Remind us of the two great commandments,
Holy Spirit, love of God and love of neighbor.*

Reading Fever Sweeps Idaho

March 5

Elizabeth Schlaefle is the director of a reading program that's sweeping Idaho.

"Right to Read" is an effective method to teach reading skills. Parents are being asked to read to their children 15 minutes a day. Radio and TV announcers are helping the program by asking periodically: "Have you read to your child today?"

Elizabeth Schlaefle says the program is a way of strengthening family life as well as promoting reading.

"Anyone who's ever been read to remembers those as special times," she says. "Even if the children couldn't understand all the words, they felt loved."

By introducing children to books at an early age, you can arouse their interest and help them become better readers, maybe even better people.

The wisdom of the world is contained in books, but it will only help us if we read and encourage others to read, too.

"We have as encouragement the holy books which are in our hands." (1 Macc. 12:9)

Lord, help us find the proper way to introduce our children to the wisdom of Your word.

Thomas Edison's Turn-on

March 6

A story about Thomas A. Edison tells us a great deal about the man.

The inventor and an assistant ran into difficulty while working on one of Edison's many projects. In frustration the assistant said, "We should give up. We have tried several thousand things that have failed."

Edison responded: "Failed, no. We have learned several thousand things that do not work."

That attitude enabled Edison to perfect the light bulb a hundred years ago. There had been experiments with light bulbs before but those bulbs burned out so fast that they were worthless except for laboratory purposes.

The bulb lit by Edison on Oct. 19, 1879, burned for 40 hours. Soon he developed a bulb that burned for 102 hours.

By his tedious experimentation Edison learned several thousand things that did not work. Our relationship to God and the world around us is like that too. We often learn by trial and error in our family life, our prayer life and on the job. Mistakes are not failures, they are starting points.

**"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."
(Luke 8:8)**

Lord, help me to persevere in the face of discouragement.

Abilities of the Retarded

March 7

The odds were against Richard Sedor of Hartford, Conn., when he took on the State Assembly.

Sedor spent ten years at a school for the retarded as a "borderline case." He had been told that he would never be able to get an education, let alone a meaningful job.

But Richard Sedor determined to improve, not only his own lot, but the lives of other mentally disabled people. For two years, he lobbied for a new bill banning discrimination against the retarded.

At first the legislators brushed off the idea as absurd. But Richard Sedor won his fight—the Connecticut Assembly recently passed the very bill he worked for.

Sedor has now been hired by the state as a mail-room clerk. He has passed his driving test and is going to high school at night.

The needs of the handicapped are worthy of our special attention. Wherever we can, let's take positive action to insure that the human rights of all people are respected. By doing so, we honor God and His people.

"Invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed." (Luke 14:13)

Lord, help us to accept all people as they are, and to serve them according to their needs.

Human Dignity

March 8

Three years ago, Mrs. Dena Hearn lay unconscious in a St. Louis Hospital, the victim of a hit-and-run driver. With two sons and a sick mother, the recently divorced woman was trying to keep her family together on welfare payments of \$170 a month.

Today, Dena Hearn works 30 hours a week helping other people find jobs.

Thanks to the Five Church Association, Mrs. Hearn got help when she needed it. Reverend Rita Slack, an ordained minister of the Christian Church, offered Mrs. Hearn's family a supply of food and transportation.

"She never asked anything of me," Mrs. Hearn recalled. "The great thing was that she didn't do anything to take my dignity away."

After six months, Dena Hearn offered to do volunteer work for the group, and eventually got a paying job doing for others what had been done for her.

Respect for the God-given dignity of our brothers and sisters can do wonders. Let's not forget it.

"Honor all men." (1 Pet. 2:17)

Keep us from spoiling the good we do, Jesus, with a superior attitude towards people.

The Case of the Two Wandas

March 9

Having someone for a double may sound innocuous, but to Wanda Marie Johnson of Prince George County, Maryland, it meant trouble.

It started in 1977 when she clashed with a credit card company that threatened suit for non-payment of a furniture bill. Ms. Johnson contested the action.

The collector asked, "Are you saying your name isn't Wanda Johnson?"

"No," she said.

"Are you saying that your birthday isn't June 15, 1953?"

"No," she said again, "I'm just saying that I never bought furniture in that store."

She was telling the truth. Another Wanda Marie Johnson, also of Prince George County, had purchased the furniture. Both women were born on the same day; both had two children and owned a 1977 two-door Ford Granada.

Worst of all, they both had identical Maryland driver's licenses because the computer determines each license by name, birthday, and make of car.

Things were finally straightened out, but not before a few people learned a valuable lesson. There are so many opportunities to jump to conclusions, but the wise person waits for the facts.

**"Do not find fault before you investigate."
(Sir. 11:7)**

*Lord, help me to reserve judgment until I
know the truth.*

Used Dollars Are Recycled

March 10

Did you ever wonder what happens to paper money after it gets worn out? The Federal Reserve Banks used to burn it, but tighter pollution control laws have restricted this method.

Today the bills are shredded into quarter-inch pieces or compacted into a cotton-like fiber.

The shreds are often sold to novelty companies. One item produced is a dollar sign—15 inches high, 12 inches wide and 5 inches thick, which contains “a million dollars” in shredded currency. Such objects must be permanently sealed in glass or plastic.

The compacted paper money is used for insulation in homes, or mixed with lubricant to fill the cracks in the ground caused by oil drills.

Instead of throwing out objects that no longer fulfill their original purpose, think of a second use for them.

Wastefulness is not a smart move in a world of scarcity and human need.

“In every matter be thoughtful.” (Sir. 31:15)

Remind us to take an extra moment, Father, to make better use of our time, energy and resources.

A Daring Rescue

March 11

John Everingham, an Australian war correspondent, risked his life for the woman he loved.

Expelled from Laos by the Communist authorities, he had to leave behind his Laotian fiancée. But he succeeded in rescuing her from a life under Communist rule.

He strapped on a scuba tank fitted with two breathing devices and swam under the surface of the rain-swollen Mekong River. The day before, three Lao-tians, trying to escape, had been shot by the Communist patrol.

Because of the strong current, he missed the rendezvous point on his first two attempts. On the third, he managed to reach his fiancée. Together they swam underwater to Thailand and freedom.

Your love may never be tested so dramatically. But there are circumstances in daily life when you may be asked to take a stand on behalf of your beloved ones. Are you ready to meet the challenge?

Love is more than emotion. It requires commitment and sacrifice.

“Love is strong as death.” (S.S. 8:6)

Lord, You sacrificed Your life out of love for us. Grant us the strength to follow Your example.

Life Must Go On

March 12

Martin Luther King, Sr., the 78-year-old Baptist preacher from Birmingham, Al. managed to survive tragedy and continue his work for justice.

Not only did he lose his son to an assassin's bullet, but his wife was murdered in an Atlanta church.

Recently, he was speaking before a large audience at an anniversary celebration. In his short but fiery sermon on "Misplaced Values," he said:

"Don't magnify what someone else may be doing and minimize the wrongs on your own part."

Speaking about the church, he commented:

"The business of the church is to give every man a sense of belonging."

A man who has suffered so many trials and still keeps his faith is an example to all. Life must go on. In spite of mishaps, human beings have the capacity to keep going. With God's help, we can even live through tragedies.

Let us live the gospel of love every day of our lives.

**"You will forget your misery; you will remember it as waters that have passed away."
(Job 11:16)**

God, help us contribute to the world's salvation in spite of our personal tragedies.

The Will to Learn

March 13

Joseph Wallace, the president of a successful business, is learning to read and write at the age of 42.

Wallace grew up poor and struggling in Manhattan. At 17, he dropped out of school with barely a second-grade reading skill. He explains why: "When you're a kid and you don't have decent clothes, you don't want to go to school."

He took a job in the garment district, pushing trolleys through the streets. With perseverance and hard work, he managed to establish his own dry-cleaning business and made it a success. But he still could not read or write.

So Joseph Wallace decided to do something about it. He found a teacher willing to give him private lessons, and started studying.

It is never too late to learn. God gives us the power to better ourselves, to grow, to acquire new skills no matter our age or condition. But it takes patience and determination.

What area of your life needs a fresh decision to turn it around?

**"Learn where there is wisdom, where there is strength, where there is understanding."
(Bar. 3:14)**

Lord, help us to lead productive lives.

Music Without Hands

March 14

A crippling disease gave a new direction to the life of Jacqueline du Pré.

Ms. du Pré was a successful cellist who traveled extensively on concert tours with her pianist husband. Suddenly, one day, her hands were numb. She had multiple sclerosis. She could no longer play the cello or, eventually, even walk or dress herself. She had to learn to handle her frustrations and to reorganize her life.

From her wheelchair, Jacqueline du Pré is now teaching music to a dozen students. She also heads a research project on multiple sclerosis to which musicians donate their fees from four concerts a year. With performers like Artur Rubinstein and Isaac Stern, the project raises money for the work.

Ms. du Pré's outlook for the future is hopeful: "I believe in realistic optimism, but not in wishful thinking."

You, too, may be suffering from a disability. Don't give up on life! Explore your potential, believe in yourself, and trust in God's help to find and reach new goals.

"God tested them and found them worthy of Himself; like gold in the furnace He tried them." (Wis. 3:5-6)

Lord, help us realize that whatever happens to us may be turned to good.

Feeding the Multitude

March 15

Doing something about the problem of world hunger is a challenge for all of us.

Food production specialists predict that by the year 1985, the world deficit of basic foods may be as much as 100 million tons. In the face of problems of such scope, we may feel powerless. It will take a global effort to reverse the trend, and every person can do his share.

- Do not waste natural resources—food, water, oil, electricity, etc.

- Educate your children so they are aware of the problem and may learn responsible management of the earth.

- Support conservation and recycling programs.

- Give to the poor a share of what you have.

God puts us in charge of this world. It is our duty to see to it that all His children lead decent human lives free from the pain of hunger. Time is running short. Be aware of the Third World, and be ready to help whenever possible.

“Give us this day our daily bread.” (Mt. 6:11)

Father, help us care for this world and for each other.

Domino Theory Put to Test

March 16

It took Bob Specia, a University of Pennsylvania junior, nine days to set up 100,000 dominoes in New York's Manhattan Center. And only 20 minutes to knock them all down—almost.

He did it for two reasons: to set a world domino record and to raise money for the Hemophilia Foundation.

As the press and spectators looked on, Specia flicked the first of the red, white, black and blue dominoes he had so laboriously arranged in an intricate pattern.

Twenty minutes later, they were falling just as he had planned—only to have the finale of the demonstration marred by the carelessness of a TV cameraman. In an effort to get a better picture, the photographer leaned over—and out of his pocket tumbled his press cards and address book.

They, too, knocked down a few dominoes, setting off another chain-reaction. But the record was broken by then and \$25,000 was raised for the charity.

Perfection usually eludes us in this life. We're ahead of the game if our best efforts produce a relatively good result. God expects us to try hard. He knows we aren't perfect.

"We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him." (Rom. 8:28)

Don't let disappointment at our imperfections, Lord, cloud our achievements.

The Third Ear

March 17

Political friends and foes alike agree, usually with a smile, that Hubert H. Humphrey, the former Vice President and Senator, couldn't give a short speech.

But according to a letter a reader sent to the New York Times when he died, he was also "a magnificent listener."

One busy day in 1965, the then Humphrey insisted on "dropping in" on a meeting of poor people involved with antipoverty programs.

He listened attentively and occasionally asked questions of the workers, who included an Oklahoma Indian, a black woman from Chicago, a white woman from Cleveland and an elderly man from New England.

A half-hour later, an aide whispered in the Vice President's ear. Noting this, the meeting chairman said, "I'll understand if you have to leave."

"Relax," replied Humphrey, "I wouldn't miss this for anything. I just changed my schedule."

And he stayed two hours.

"He was a mighty good listener," concluded the letter writer. "He had a third ear—his heart."

"If you love to listen you will gain knowledge, and if you incline your ear you will become wise." (Sir. 6:33)

Father, never let us forget to listen at least as much as we talk.

What's in a Life?

March 18

Ever wonder where some American towns got their odd names? Dr. Irwin Ross of Chicago did, and found these stories behind towns with unusual names:

- Seven Stars, Pa., was named after seven beautiful daughters of a local hotel keeper. Stagecoach drivers who patronized the inn named the town for the girls.

- Ten Sleep, Wy., was so called by the Shoshone and Crow Indians because it was ten "sleeps" from each tribe's reservation.

- Jigger, La., was named by its local postmistress, who jokingly submitted the nickname of her ten-year-old son to the Post Office Department.

- Mad River, Cal., got its name when a surveying party got in a fight over whether to cross the river.

- Sisterville, W. Va., was named for the 21 daughters of a prominent citizen.

These town names have a special meaning. So does each person's life. And it is by our words and actions that we will be remembered. Make each day count.

"We exhorted each of you . . . to lead a life worthy of God." (1 Thess. 2:12)

Keep me mindful, God, that you gave me this life to live.

Follow the Leader

March 19

Rosalyn Carter took a train ride from the White House to the District of Columbia General Hospital. The First Lady rode the new Washington subway to demonstrate that the four-mile trip to the hospital was now made easier by public transportation.

At the hospital, Mrs. Carter then proceeded to give everyone some good example. She climbed a step ladder and spent about half an hour painting the walls of a waiting room in the emergency area.

This was part of a volunteer, non-governmental project encouraging private citizens to become involved in community welfare.

From the founding of this country to the present time, Americans have had the knack of organizing themselves to help one another. There are plenty of opportunities to brighten our neighborhoods and people's lives.

Give it some thought, and put your own talents to work for others.

“‘What house will you build for Me?’ says the Lord.” (Acts 7:49)

Lord, help us get together with our neighbors to do Your work more effectively.

Remedy for Discipline Problems

March 20

What is the greatest problem in the classroom? Ask any teacher. It's discipline.

The California Teachers Association sponsors two-day assertiveness training workshops for harried teachers. In Pasadena, after nearly 300 teachers and 18 principals took the course, school time devoted to discipline shrank dramatically.

Role-playing sessions show teachers how to avoid timidity and hostility while becoming more assertive. They are advised to repeat orders until they are obeyed, to make eye contact with students, to place a hand on an unruly pupil's shoulder and to use first names.

"Never argue with a kid," advises instructor Lee Cantor. "You'll lose—and they lose in the long run."

In the home or classroom, discipline without love is sterile. But taking a firm line in important matters is a way of showing love.

"God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control." (2 Tim. 1:7)

Stiffen our resolve, Holy Spirit, to combine affection with firmness.

Scientific Comic Books No Joke

March 21

A new trend in children's education may come as a shock to traditionalists. It's the scientific comic book.

Jearl Walker, a physics professor at Cleveland State University, thinks that the boring textbooks of the past are not going to sell. "In the post-Sputnik era," he said, "fewer and fewer students are going in for science and math. We've got to do something to bring them back."

Prof. Walker's contribution is called "The Flying Circus of Physics."

Another comic book, by Howard Swann, a mathematician at San Jose State University, contains a talking pig, two animated Greek letters, a wise-cracking "limit machine" and a duck named "Malicious Melvin."

Mathematical concepts, some of them profound and difficult, are acted out by these cartoon characters.

Finding new ways to do things is part of the educational process. It's a good attitude to take in running our lives. Do we ask ourselves how we could do better—at home, on the job, in our community? Remember, God is in the future as well as in the past, in change as well as in stability.

"Teach me Your way, O Lord; and lead me on a level path." (Ps. 27:11)

Holy Spirit, open my mind to new ideas.

Consumer Unit Makes the Grade

March 22

San Francisco takes its consumer fraud seriously. The city has a unit that in a four-month period handled 1,326 complaints and returned \$50,000 to the people.

With eight unpaid law students who want to learn consumer legislation, the unit frees lawyers in the district attorney's office for bigger cases.

Cases involved misleading ads by supermarkets, "natural" foods with artificial ingredients, a mail order house that never delivered the goods and an auto dealer who tried to get out of a warranty.

The unit runs a Complaintmobile, a van that cruises San Francisco neighborhoods looking for consumer grievances. The staff has also written a play, with Spanish and Chinese as well as English versions, that explains to people the workings of small claims court.

It's not enough to have good laws on the books. People have to know about them. Our proclaimed goal of equal justice under law will continue to fall short unless more of us make efforts to uphold the law. Support those programs that protect consumers, the poor and those who are neglected.

"Now we know that the law is good, if any one uses it lawfully." (1 Tim. 1:8)

Guide us, Lord, in conducting our lives with a greater sense of justice.

Teenage Business Thrives

March 23

Two teenage girls in Hoboken, N. J., decided to go into business for themselves. At age 15 and 14, Jill Singleton and Gina Gonzales were too young for the few jobs available.

They composed a note offering their household services to friends and neighbors. Business is booming. Jill and Gina are taking on two or three friends to help.

The girls vacuum, dust, clean bathrooms, wax and mop. Their pay varies between \$4 and \$5 per hour.

Their parents are somewhat astonished at the enterprise of the two young women. It seems they aren't particularly neat at home.

Jill admits: "I hate to clean my own house."

Many signs of initiative in young people can be nipped in the bud by the attitude of their elders. We can do them a service by giving them a sympathetic hearing and a word of encouragement.

What they do later in life can be vitally affected by the way we react to their first stirrings of enterprise.

"Encourage one another and build one another up." (1 Thess. 5:11)

Let us be known, Holy Spirit, as persons who say "try it," rather than those who murmur "don't bother."

Open Your Eyes to Solutions

March 24

For hundreds of blind persons, an organization called BOLD has meant a new life of outdoor fun.

Standing for Blind Outdoor Leisure Development, BOLD was founded in 1969 by Jean Eymere, a former Aspen ski instructor blinded by diabetes. Beginning in Aspen with ski lessons for the blind, BOLD has expanded to 18 clubs nationwide that teach skiing, ice skating, horseback riding, swimming, rafting, golf, fishing, hiking and camping.

In its early years, BOLD taught from 35 to 65 blind persons how to ski. Now about 500 instructors work with the organization as teachers and guides.

BOLD's founders believe that it is proving that lack of imagination, rather than lack of sight, is the main obstacle to blind persons leading a more active outdoor life.

A positive attitude can do wonders. Look at the problems in your own life and then look for new ways to solve them. Be an "inventor" when it comes to people problems.

"Keep alert with all perseverance." (Eph. 6:18)

Lord, help me not to give up.

Ready for College—at 8

March 25

Sayed Jalal from Afghanistan completed his elementary and high school studies in 18 months. He's eight years old.

When Jalal was five, he asked his father, a former math teacher, to show him numbers. The parent showed him one to ten and said to come back after he had mastered them. A few minutes later, the lad returned and asked for more.

In four hours, Jalal learned about numbers up to a billion. After a little coaching, he could add, subtract, multiply and divide.

At six, the child was given a special test by local scholars and answered all the questions correctly.

Finishing high school, the boy came with his father to the United States. In New York, professors who tested him declared him "ready for college" once he did some refresher work and improved his English.

Unusual talent attracts attention. Each of us has some talent. It might not make headlines but it could mean a lot for those who would benefit by it.

Don't neglect or bury the skills God has given you. Find them, use them and spend your life refining them.

"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them." (Rom. 12:6)

Increase our self-confidence, Holy Spirit, so that we will use to the utmost what we have been given.

Fast by Three Men Saves Town

March 26

A series of economic decisions made in Dublin threatened to cripple the 1,500-year-old town of Tuam, in the west of Ireland.

Pleas and arguments failed to deter government officials from canceling train service and closing a state-run factory in the town of 6,000 in the rolling hills of Galway.

Then three townsmen—a supermarket owner, a hardware store manager and a factory supervisor—issued a “cry for social justice.”

They went on a fast. Strong support came from 5,000 people who trooped into Town Hall to sign a petition protesting the Dublin actions.

On the sixth day of the fast, officials relented and the factory reopened. Two days later, the railroad agreed to resume freight service.

There are usually less extreme ways to get the ear of City Hall or Dublin or Washington.

Making government responsive is possible with hard work and persistence. And each of us has a role in that process.

“I the Lord love justice.” (Is. 61:8)

Spur us, Lord, to take seriously our responsibilities to public life.

Patients Come First

March 27

Susan Meredith of Fort Worth, Texas, considers herself one of the "new breed of nurses."

"We are independent, aggressive and curious," says the 29-year-old nursing graduate. "We aren't afraid to question a doctor's orders if we think he is wrong in his treatment of a patient," she said.

Ms. Meredith, who trained in four hospitals and a nursing home, feels that many hospitals are more concerned with paperwork than with patients. "Most people," she adds, "don't know that they have rights, or they are afraid to speak up."

Even when doctors indicate they have no time to discuss your health, "you should insist that they answer your questions," she advises.

Ms. Meredith, who has written a paper on the importance of touch in patient care, declared, "Even with all the fancy equipment and scientific methods, touching a patient—holding his hand or patting his shoulder—can be important medicine."

The personal touch can mend an argument, reassure a lonely person or even help in healing. It is the expression of God's loving gift to us—our humanity.

"Be kind to one another." (Eph. 4:32)

Slow us down, Lord, when we get so caught up in doing things that we forget the people involved.

Never Too Young to Learn

March 28

It's never too early to start becoming a smart consumer.

New York's Department of Consumer Affairs conducts workshops in consumerism for children in public schools. Some 15,000 youngsters a year learn how to watch for shoddy goods, phony sales, short-weighting and dishonest salespersons.

One game the first-graders like is called "Store." With parents looking on, the children are given play money.

At a counter marked: "Sale—five blocks for \$1," the first tiny customer is given only two blocks. If he or she starts to walk away, attention is called to the fraud.

Parents usually get involved in the discussion that follows. The youngsters quickly catch on.

It's not easy to be a smart consumer. It takes concentration and the ability to avoid impulse buying. Consumerism is just another way to use wisely whatever resources the Creator has put at our disposal.

**"Everything has been created for its use."
(Sir. 39:21)**

Make us more aware of what we are getting, Lord, in return for what we pay.

Shaping Up

March 29

Was "losing weight" one of those vague and unsuccessful New Year's resolutions you forgot by February? Drs. Jean Mayer and Johanna Dwyer offer these tips for making another try at it:

- Get a new low-fat, low-calorie cookbook. Use it.
- Learn a sport; then get out and do it.
- Learn calorie counting. Record your weight daily.
- Go for walks daily.
- Add daily calisthenics to your schedule.
- Use fresh fruits for desserts, without sugar.
- Plan an active vacation—swimming, hiking.
- Read books on nutrition.
- Win your family over to more nutritious snacks, less junk food.
- For holidays, fix those special candies and desserts for needy families—not yourself.

Sounds good, doesn't it? Even appealing. Be methodical in trying to solve problems. Write them down. Then write ways to correct what's wrong. When others are involved, be sure everyone's welfare is considered.

**"In great or small matters do not act amiss."
(Sir. 5:15)**

Holy Spirit, I need Your inspiration every day.

Turnabout

March 30

Gerri Lange, hostess on the TV show "Turnabout," knows what it is to be down and out.

After the break-up of her marriage, she was in New York, working at three jobs to support three small sons. Realizing she could not go on, she decided to go back to her native California. When she boarded the bus, all she had left was \$25 and a lot of hope.

In San Francisco, she worked during the day and went to college at night. Then she had the good fortune of landing a job on a TV show where her warmth won her a devoted audience. Later, she was selected to host "Turnabout."

This national series examines such topics as stress in modern life and changing family structures. Gerri Lange offers this advice: "Never count yourself out; take a negative situation and turn it around."

Cultivate positive attitudes. With a sense of purpose and with trust in God, you too can change negative patterns and improve your life.

"It is He who remembered us in our low estate, for His steadfast love endures forever." (Ps. 136:23)

Lord, help us put our trust in You when we have reached the limit of our strength.

A Voice for Shy Persons

March 31

Did you ever feel too shy to ask a neighbor to lower the volume of his stereo, or cancel a doctor's appointment or tell somebody "I love you?"

Katie Ganley, 27, of Pittsburgh, has made a business of being a stand-in for people who feel they can't speak up for themselves. She calls it "Lipservice."

For a fee, Ms. Ganley will make phone calls for shy souls. "I don't make calls," she said, "that I wouldn't want to get, which I feel is pretty fair."

So far, she has patched up romances, settled arguments and arranged dates. She refuses to convey obscene phone messages or play detective for suspicious lovers.

On a busy day, Ms. Ganley will make 40 calls. "I was never a phone talker," she said, "but I am now."

Speaking up doesn't necessarily mean looking for a fight. If we are annoyed, we can calmly explain to the offending party his or her bad effect on us. Or our good feelings about those we love.

A small beginning, today, could be a start towards being able to say what needs to be said.

"Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you." (Acts 18:9-10)

*When we feel too shy to speak our minds,
Father, remind us that our words can be a
service to others, too.*

A House Made of Trash

April 1

Martin Green is a thrifty sort. He is also an inventor. Three years ago, the Mahwah, N. J., man cancelled his local garbage pickup service.

And he's using trash to build a house.

"I found out over 95 percent of that garbage could be used for building material," he said.

Green, whose 75 inventions include a line of recreational equipment for the handicapped, separates the solid waste into containers for glass, paper and cans. He then compresses these piles with a car jack and mixes them with concrete, sand and a secret-formula binding concoction of his own.

The 78-year-old inventor has already completed a 12 by 16-foot patio and is preparing to build a 32 by 52-foot house at half the cost of a conventional house that size.

"My idea," he says, "is to invent things that help humanity."

We can all be more inventive in finding ways to make the lives of others more pleasant.

**"The plans of the mind belong to man."
(Prov. 16:1)**

*Stimulate our imaginations, Holy Spirit, so
we help others, and not just ourselves.*

Time for Leisure Education?

April 2

What would you do with your leisure time if you had a 24-hour work week? According to many social observers, you would feel guilty.

"A guilt complex will inevitably cramp our style for enjoying leisure," said author Leslie Dowling, "if we have a feeling we are wasting our time."

And yet our work week is shrinking—from 70 hours in 1850 to 40 hours in 1950 and about 35 hours today. A 20 to 24-hour work week by the year 2000 is not out of the question.

Educators are calling for a "leisure component" in schooling from the elementary level through college. One foundation, the Lilly Endowment, is sponsoring a pilot project in Indiana schools.

The dread of leisure time may be that we just have to make more decisions on how to live, on what things are worth doing. Pray for the balance needed to direct your life in the most constructive way.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (Eccl. 3:1)

Lord, may we be able to have a healthy enjoyment of our free time and use it for others as well.

An Unusual Hope Chest

April 3

Father Emmet Norden of Hancock, Mich., has built a pine box which he calls his "hope chest." Hope for eternal life.

The priest constructed the box—his coffin—for \$40 with the help of his parishioners one Lent. The money saved on the casket was given to the poor.

Says Father Norden, the body is going back to dust so "why be laid to rest in a silk-lined coffin with an innerspring mattress?"

Father Norden disagrees with those who think an expensive funeral is the "last thing" they can do for a loved one. "It's not really true," he said. "They're gone. If you haven't done something for them by that time, it's too late."

Now is the time to show your love to those close to you. Flowers at a wake have no impact compared to the bouquet you give to a parent or a spouse while they're still with you.

Don't put off for tomorrow the act of kindness you could do today. Tomorrow may be one day too late.

The Apostle Paul assures us that Jesus "will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

**"Kindness is like a garden of blessings."
(Sir. 40:17)**

Let us prove that we care for our loved ones while there is still time, Lord.

Should I Pop the Question?

April 4

Romantic infatuation has very little to do with true love, in the opinion of Ray Short, a sociologist who teaches a marriage course at the University of Wisconsin.

True love just doesn't happen magically, he says, in advising students to make sure they're really in love before marrying. He offers these checkpoints to identify infatuation:

- Thinking the other person is faultless.
- Loss of interest when separated by time or distance.
- Frequent quarrels.
- Impatience with the other's family or friends.

"If you ask yourself about a relationship before you go ahead," says Short, a father of five who has been married 25 years, "it may keep you from saying 'I do' and then later saying you don't."

There are no infallible signs that a marriage will or will not work. But a willingness to give and receive love wholeheartedly, an unselfish spirit, is a good indication that true love is really there.

"And the two shall become one." (Mark 10:7)

Lord, grant couples the wisdom to ask the right questions before they marry.

Measuring the Value of Life

April 5

By what yardstick do you measure the value of life?

A British journalist, Mary Craig, in a new book titled "Blessings," offers an appealing standard. After a forthright description of her successful efforts to come to grips with the seemingly hideous retardation of her second son, she explains her very real grief at his death:

"I owed him an incalculable debt. If our value as human beings lies in what we do for each other, Paul had done a great deal: he had, at the very least, opened the eyes of his mother to the suffering that was in the world, and had brought her to understand something of the redemptive force it was capable of generating."

That is quite an accomplishment for a 10-year-old who was never able to speak, required constant attention, had no awareness of his parents and lived what some would call a vegetative life.

Of suffering, Mary Craig writes: "The value of suffering does not lie in the pain of it, which is morally neutral—but in what the sufferer makes of it," which is the essence of Christ's acceptance of the cross.

**"Father . . . not as I will but as You will."
(Mt. 26:39)**

Jesus, strengthen us through the willing acceptance of the opportunities You send to us each day.

How a Mountain Library Was Built

April 6

Ward, Col., has 125 residents, stands 9,000 feet in the Rockies and boasts a library of 6,000 books.

A few years ago, Ward had no library. Then a wandering youth named Barry Levass came for a short while. He said nothing of his intentions but, not long after his departure, he sent the town 800 books in 25 boxes.

The boxes remained in a small log cabin, unopened, until Greg Tebrich, a poet, came by. He and some friends used them as a private lending library.

Then the town contributed a few hundred dollars and moved the expanding library into the back room of the Ward post office. It was now a public library.

Jean Pless, an artist and carpenter, decorated the small room, using local wood and other materials. Business has been good. The library has 200 card holders.

Except for its remote location, this is not an unusual story—one person building on what another has done. No one person does it all. Each has a part to play. Each, in God's plan, is important. You are important.

“According to the commission of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it.” (1 Cor. 3:10)

Don't let me get discouraged just because I can't do it all, Lord.

How to Correct Nervous Habits

April 7

Do you bite your nails, play with your hair or crack your knuckles? Such undesirable habits can be reduced or eliminated, according to R. Gregory Nunn, a clinical psychologist.

In his book, *Habit Control in a Day*, Nunn recommends techniques he has taught to hundreds of people in his Habits Clinic in Evanston, Ill.

Among other things, Nunn suggests they list the embarrassments caused by the habit and the advantages life would have without it.

He helps people develop physical activities that are incompatible with the habit, such as clenching one's fists when inclined to bite nails. Nunn also advises keeping a log to record successes and lapses.

Books on self-improvement usually sell well. People are anxious to do better, though there is a tendency to think that solutions come easily. They don't.

By getting rid of habits that hold us back, we can use our energies more effectively in the service of others.

"Behold, I make all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

*Make us reasonable in our expectations,
Lord, and persevering in our efforts to do,
and to be, better.*

Speedy Justice Wins Praise

April 8

In two years, the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reduced its backlog from 911 cases pending, to 713. It handled 1,850 cases in one year.

One former federal judge, Harold R. Tyler, called this achievement "unique in the annals of the federal appellate system."

Judge Tyler and a few other lawyers gave a party to mark the event. They invited the deans of law schools and the heads of bar associations in Vermont, Connecticut and New York—the states served by the court.

Letters of praise for the court came from the President, the attorney general and the chief justice of the Supreme Court.

It is an old axiom that justice delayed is justice denied. Our legal system is so overloaded today that it often unwittingly results in grave injustice, especially to the poor. Each of us has a responsibility to render justice promptly to those to whom we owe it.

"Hold fast to love and justice." (Hos. 12:6)

Help us, Lord, to pay our just debts without delay.

Depressed? Try This

April 9

Dr. Helen DeRosis, a New York psychiatrist, estimates that about 16 million Americans suffer from depression. And she is trying to do something about it.

The symptoms of depression include the inability to eat or sleep, unexplained fatigue, loss of interest in job or people, feelings of inadequacy or of being unloved.

The condition can last from a few weeks to a lifetime. Dr. DeRosis has formed Depressives Anonymous to help people get over it. Members meet weekly and little by little get themselves moving again.

The philosophy of the organization is that "every person has a great deal of strength, resources and wellness." The group setting helps people share their feelings in a sympathetic atmosphere. One suggestion for depressed persons is to spend 20 minutes a day doing something they enjoyed in the past.

Chances are, if we're depressed, we're not doing much for ourselves or those around us. It's important to try to get help. God will support our efforts and make us more sensitive to others in the same situation.

"I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow." (Jer. 31:13)

Make us aware, Jesus, that it's human to get depressed. Help us when we do.

The Beauty in a Blade of Grass

April 10

At the age of 34, Mrs. Vita Buckley of Dix Hills, N. Y., became almost totally blind. She could see colors, but not details.

The mother of three, she developed kerataconus, a disease that attacks the cornea, the transparent tissue that covers the iris and transmits light to the optic nerve.

Mrs. Buckley was lucky. Within a week, she was able to receive a corneal transplant in one eye. A year later, the other eye received the same treatment. Corneal transplants are not common, because people seldom donate their eyes to the Eye Bank.

What was it like to regain her sight? "I was sitting in my kitchen one day," she said in an interview, "when I noticed I could see the veins in the leaves, make out the bark on trees and the individual blades of grass.

"I was suddenly aware of details that I'd forgotten, since I was used to seeing only colors."

Do we appreciate the gift of sight? Do we ever thank God that we can behold a leaf, a tree, a blade of grass, a loved one's face?

"Thank the Lord for His steadfast love, for His wonderful works." (Ps. 107:15)

Help us to slow down, Lord, and begin to take in the beauties of the universe You let us share.

Signs Along the Highway

April 11

For the past 20 years, Rich Gerritson of Rock Valley, Ia., has been pushing his message via roadside signs.

Gerritson works for the state's Department of Transportation. His job is to place signs along the highway. But the ones he paints at his own expense are quite different. They promote the word of God.

One of his signs says: "Work for God. The pay is small. But the retirement plan is out of this world."

Another reads: "There are three types of believers: believers in Jesus Christ, make-believers and unbelievers. Which type are you?"

Gerritson says, "I hope a driver will come along and the verse might touch him."

He said he turned to religion 20 years ago after his son, 12, was killed in an accident. He also teaches Sunday School and distributes bibles.

Roadside signs are one way of heeding Jesus' call to shout His message from the housetops. But often the best way to let people know what we believe is simply to live our faith.

"Do not be faithless, but believing." (John 20:27)

*Increase and deepen our faith, Holy Spirit,
so it will show itself in our lives.*

Learning to Say Goodbye

April 12

Why do some people have so much trouble saying goodbye? Psychologist Mortimer Feinberg thinks the problem is caused by parents who were overprotective or who rejected their children.

To help others overcome what Freud called "separation anxiety," a condition he himself has had to conquer, Feinberg wrote the book: "Leavetaking: How to Handle Life's Most Difficult Crises."

The book looks at major leavetakings such as retirement, divorce and death and discusses methods for coping with them. It suggests that planning is needed, that the death of an old relationship or of a condition of overdependence must be replaced by the positive aspects of the new relationships that can be formed.

"Nobody wants to change," says Feinberg. We build defenses against change. He advises professional help for those who are chronically depressed or melancholic.

"To live is to change," said John Henry Newman, "and to be perfect is to have changed often." Not every change is an improvement, of course, but with God's help it can result in at least personal growth.

"He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God." (Ps. 40:3)

Provide us with a positive outlook, Father, so we can deal with change, separation and even death.

Ingredients of a Good Teacher

April 13

Who were the best teachers you ever had? What qualities did they have in common?

Lea Ebro earned her doctorate at Ohio State University by writing a paper on 17 teachers at the university who had been selected in recent years for Distinguished Teaching Awards.

By analyzing their working patterns and teaching behavior, she discovered these common characteristics: that each was enthusiastic, businesslike, clear and precise.

"Such teachers are in command of their classes," she said. "They get their students to interact with them and they respond immediately when students ask questions or give answers."

She found that outstanding teachers left students free to interrupt, created a warm classroom climate, walked around as they talked and used gestures often.

A good teacher imparts not so much a body of knowledge as a desire to learn. And that can stay with us for life.

One quality that underlies all the rest is a love for students. This attitude, like a candle in the darkness, both illumines and warms. Each of us, with God's help, can light candles of understanding and concern.

**"In your teaching show integrity, gravity,
and sound speech that cannot be censured."
(Titus 2:7)**

*Jesus, help us to learn from others whatever
will enable us to carry out the mission in
life You have given us.*

"Dead on Arrival," He's Now Married

April 14

A young ex-marine pronounced dead on arrival after an automobile accident in Chicago several years ago, walked down the aisle with the woman who wouldn't give up on him.

Peter Saraceno had been thrown more than 60 feet when the car he was driving was cut off by a truck and crashed. Because of severe head injuries, he was given up for dead at the hospital. Then, on a last try, a doctor found a faint pulse.

Neither Saraceno's mother nor his fiance, Linda Frschalla, believed medical predictions that he would never pull through. Miss Frschalla quit her job and took special training to care for him. Day after day she talked to him until finally he began to move his eyes.

Gradually recovering, he began to exercise his legs in an outdoor pool Miss Frschalla bought with her savings. Two years later, Peter Saraceno struggled down the aisle of Our Lady of Pompeii Church with a walker to marry the woman who cared.

Love can sometimes bring life out of apparent death. Don't give up while there is hope. Through God's power, our loving devotion can restore others in some of the most hopeless situations.

**"Your steadfast love is before my eyes."
(Ps. 26:3)**

*Remind us in moments of darkness, Lord,
that the Father's love will sustain us.*

He Succeeded Where Others Failed

April 15

William Norris of Control Data Corp. has successfully employed more than 1,000 workers—mostly unskilled and hard-core unemployed.

Says Norris, 66, chairman of the \$2.3 billion computer firm based in Minneapolis, some companies “figured it was just philanthropy. They sent in their money, but not their smarts or their guts.”

Norris sought out local leaders, built day-care centers for working mothers, offered flexible hours and insisted that his executives make serious efforts to train people.

The average worker in his first plant, built in 1968, has been on the job five years.

Norris thinks America's decaying cities will be rebuilt by consortiums of private industry—with help from government and investment by churches and universities—to create jobs and assist small businesses.

Each of us has a part to play in making everybody's tomorrow better than today.

“They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous.” (1 Tim. 6:18)

Never let us lose heart, Lord, as we try to help people in need.

Prayer as a Form of Sculpture

April 16

One of the newest statues in Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C., is that of Mother Joseph, a 19th century Sister of Providence. She established 29 hospitals, schools and orphanages throughout the Northwest.

The bronze statue, which took two years to complete, depicts the Vienna-born nun on her knees praying.

"I wanted to express the power of prayer," says Felix de Weldon, the sculptor. "Through the power of prayer, Mother Joseph achieved something that seemed impossible."

Researching your subject is only part of the sculpting process. De Weldon believes this form of art is "all emotion, all feeling, and all sensitivity. Your thoughts and feelings have to materialize and you have to transfer that into form."

Faith is also important to the process. "My religious beliefs give me the strength and the power to do my work," he says.

Through prayer we contact our Creator and allow His emotions, feelings and sensitivities to form us. Through prayer we "research" the Person in whose image we have been formed. We allow God to shape us and to reach the potential He had in mind when He created us.

"The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects." (James 5:16)

Father, through prayer draw us closer to You.

Girl Speaks After 12-Month Coma

April 17

It was Good Friday when Karen Delahanty of Avon, Conn., began to speak after 12 months in a coma.

The young woman had been severely injured in an auto accident. Given only a 50-50 chance of surviving, there was little prospect that she would regain consciousness, according to doctors.

Her parents visited her each day—and prayed. Then on Good Friday, when Karen's mother got up to leave her bedside for home, the young woman's eyes fluttered and she said softly but distinctly: "I don't want you to go home."

Later, she greeted her father with, "Hi, Dad."

"Those were the words I had been praying for. It was Holy Week and, so far as I'm concerned, it was an Easter blessing from God," said Joseph Delahanty.

Easter is as simple—and mysterious—as life out of death. Prayer may not be answered in the manner we expect, but God's unchanging love never fails to reveal itself.

When your life takes on the aspect of Holy Week, recall the divine power that marked the climax of Jesus' last days.

**"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep."
(1 Cor. 15:20)**

*Deepen our faith, Jesus, that we may always
be conscious of the resurrection power
which raised You.*

First Blind Opera Singer

April 18

Maureen Young of Chicago recently overcame one more barrier to the fuller employment of blind persons. She sang the lead role of Mimi in a production of Puccini's opera, "La Boheme" with the New York Grand Opera Company.

The person responsible for the selection of the 32-year-old soprano was Vincent La Selva, artistic director and musical conductor of the company.

Recalling the incident, La Selva says, "I really liked her voice. She sang with good feeling."

However, he adds, "No one would give her a chance to do anything . . . I thought she could do Boheme."

"He really knows how to help me," said Ms. Young. "I trust Vincent because he trusts me to know my own blindness. He trusts I know what I can do."

Not giving people a chance is the ultimate put-down. Trusting shows that we have respect for them and their abilities. This can be risky but there is great satisfaction in seeing another develop his or her potential.

God expects us to have faith in what people can do, not to harp on what we think they can't do. Are you trustworthy—and trusting?

**"O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"
(Mt. 14:31)**

*Inspire us, Holy Spirit, that we may have
the courage to trust people who have trust
in themselves.*

The Greatest Gift of All

April 19

Swedish novelist Sigrid Undset wrote some lines nearly a half-century ago that demonstrates the link between Christmas and Easter. They provide some food for thought about giving and about life:

“When we give each other Christmas gifts in His name,” she wrote, “let us remember that He has given us the sun and the moon and the stars, and the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans—and all that lives and moves upon them.

“He has given us all green things and everything that blossoms and bears fruit—and all that we quarrel about and all that we have misused—and to save us from our own foolishness, from all our sins, He came down to earth and gave us Himself.”

God’s greatest gift is that of His Son. Without being self-conscious about it, Jesus taught us how to live simply by living His life.

Possibly He would have preferred living to a ripe old age rather than dying as a young man. But He would not waver from speaking the truth. That, too, was a gift. He taught us how to die—not fearfully, or bitterly, or even triumphally. He died as He lived, faithful to the Father who sent Him into the world as a gift to us. And His resurrection is the greatest gift of all.

“He has risen, he is not here.” (Mark 16:6)

Father, let the Feast of the Resurrection find us more reflective and more grateful for Your surpassing generosity.

Nightclub With a Difference

April 20

Alan Stevens, 26, has a love for puppets and a love for the Christian faith. So he started a new kind of nightclub in St. Louis.

The club, called Alan and Friends, serves only soft drinks and appeals to family audiences. Between 100 and 150 persons attend the Christian oriented performances. They feature the puppets, a singing trio and a variety of musical acts.

"I felt there was a need for this," says the former Baptist youth worker, "because there's not really a place in St. Louis where you can find professional Christian entertainment."

"I call it a nightclub," he explains, "in part because if you call it a program, you're not going to get many people . . . We stay away from trying to look like a church service."

Stevens is helped by 25 volunteers. Before each performance, they pray together backstage.

A good way to attract people is to avoid a heavy-handed approach. If you have faith—and do your job well—chances are you'll have a positive effect.

"Have faith in God." (Mark 11:22)

*Increase our confidence in You, Holy Spirit,
and our confidence in our own power for
good.*

Soul Food

April 21

Walk into Anton's Foods in Mankato, Minn., and you'll find more than groceries. You'll find love.

Millie Anton, 72, owns and operates the only remaining family-owned market in downtown Mankato. She and her brother John began the business in 1933.

One reason the store has survived all these years may be Millie's concern for people. Coffee is always available to her customers, and Millie greets most of them by their first names.

The neighbors return her kindness. "Anytime I have a problem, if something goes wrong here, my neighbors fix it for me," she says. "No matter what happens, they're right here to help."

Millie hasn't had a vacation for 22 years, ever since taking full responsibility for the store following her brother's death.

She has thought about retirement, but hasn't taken that step because of her concern about where her older customers would shop. Anyway, she adds, "I love to work."

We enrich our own lives when we truly care for others. Love, demonstrated by service, nourishes the soul as much as food nourishes our bodies.

"Let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7)

Lord, teach us to reach out in loving service to those around us.

He Knew a Crack When He Saw One

April 22

One man's alertness helped avert a possible catastrophe on an elevated commuter train in Chicago.

Hernan Solarte, a structural engineer with the Rock Island Railroad, was on his way to work when he spotted what looked like cracks in girders supporting Chicago Transit Authority tracks.

"Although I pass that section of the 'El' tracks every day," said Solarte, 46, "I never remembered seeing markings like that before . . . I thought I knew a crack when I saw one."

CTA officials confirmed Solarte's suspicions and closed a section of the track for two weeks for repairs.

Solarte was awarded the city's highest honor, the Medal of Merit. "I feel the honor deeply in my heart," he said. "But what I did was just a part of citizenship—an effort of living with others."

That's a good definition of citizenship. To be good citizens, we have to do more than observe the laws. We have to be alert to dangers, big and small, that threaten life, freedom, or the God-given rights of all.

"Let us choose what is right; let us determine among ourselves what is good." (Job 34:4)

Inspire us, Holy Spirit, to be men and women who are deeply concerned about the welfare of our communities.

Everybody's Got a "Private Space"

April 23

Each of us has a "private space," an invisible wall within which we allow only our most intimate friends. If others get too close, we tend to look away, fidget, to become uncomfortable and defensive, according to those who study human behavior.

We in the United States usually reserve about four feet of space for ourselves. People from Latin America and the Middle East are much closer when they converse. This can lead to misunderstandings when people of different cultural backgrounds mix without knowing the unspoken cultural ground rules.

The importance of private space is recognized in offices, where desks are kept seven to twelve feet apart to preserve workers' privacy and concentration.

Teachers appear to be most effective at distances of 12 to 25 feet. Beyond that, a talk becomes a lecture.

However large or small our private space may be, we all need time and space to ourselves. These can be moments of thought, reflection or prayer.

Cherish your private space and allow it to others.

**"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts."
(Col. 3:15)**

*Alert us, Holy Spirit, to treasure those brief
instants when we can raise our hearts to
You.*

Exercise Has No Age Limit

April 24

Exercise and fitness classes for persons over 65 are on the upswing, according to C. Carson Conrad, director of the President's Council on Physical Fitness.

In the last three years, Conrad, 66, has conducted workshops on fitness with more than 140,000 persons in 12 states and 32 counties or cities.

He says that arthritis is typical of most people over 50. But he adds, "You can't give in to it—you just have to work your way through it and stretch and stretch and stretch."

The result of regular exercise, he says, is that people keep a more upright posture and have the muscular strength to maintain skeletal structure.

"People really don't stoop because they're old," he notes. "They're old because they stoop."

Stretching of the body is good. But there are other kinds of stretching. That added effort to learn more about world events, about someone we think we know, about someone we may dislike, can widen our horizons and open our hearts.

"Give your servant therefore an understanding mind." (1 Kgs. 3:9)

Keep us from stagnating, Holy Spirit, in mind, heart and body.

The Wounded Healers

April 25

Behind the headlines of pain—child abuse, alcoholism, divorce—something good is happening.

Self-help groups are multiplying. Alcoholics Anonymous, founded in 1935, was the pioneer. Now there are more than 500,000 groups to assist the terminally ill, the divorced, gamblers, the overweight, the handicapped and many more. In all, such groups reach more than 15 million people.

"It's amazing," says Glen Evans, author of *The Family Circle Guide to Self-Help*, no matter what the group, you see newcomers, who only a few weeks before were anxiety-ridden . . . , gradually take on a trust of their peers and start to communicate, to even smile again." He adds:

"Being of use to someone else, helping them with their problems similar to your own, provides renewed strength, encouragement and enhances your own sense of worth."

Through helping others to live with suffering that is similar to yours, you can find meaning for your own pain.

"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." (1 Cor. 12:26)

*Help me, Lord, to turn my pain into a gift
I can offer to others.*

Paging Jim Smith

April 26

Jim Smith. It's an ordinary name. But not so ordinary that people are not proud to bear it—thanks in part to the efforts of one of them.

That would be Jim Smith of Camp Hill, Pa., who founded the Jim Smith Society in 1969. It now has 653 members and most of them showed up for the society's annual convention in Wentworth-by-the-Sea, N. H. They convened there because the resort is owned by—yup—Jim Smith.

Jim Smith—that's the Camp Hill Jim Smith—keeps track of the members by using their home town as sort of a middle name.

He says he started the society because he wanted to rescue the country's Jim Smiths from being lost amid “fancier” names.

Even if we were all named Jim Smith, we would each be distinguishable and unique. Each of us has talents, hopes and responsibilities that God has given to no other. It's up to us to make the best use of our special assets.

**“But each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.”
(1 Cor. 7:7)**

Remind us, Jesus, when we forget it, that we are each unique and irreplaceable.

Doctor Faces Own Death

April 27

Attempting to come to terms with his own death, Dr. Julian Kirchick of Old Westbury, N. Y., kept a journal for four years.

"I wanted to write it down," the surgeon told a reporter after sending his journal to a newspaper.

"Maybe it was to give myself some courage. And I thought it was interesting, a doctor facing death," he said in an interview, which took place in a hospital room in Miami where Dr. Kirchick was dying of cancer.

Because his collection of scribbled notes, his philosophy, expressions of agony and words of hope seemed to help him, he thought they might be of some value to others, he said, explaining why he had sent the journal to a newspaper.

He confessed that "Doctors don't do any better at dying than anybody else."

Death comes to us all but the promise of resurrection is there. God, who was with us in all our joys, will not abandon us in moments of desolation. Pray for the strength to believe that when you need it most.

"Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. 14:8)

Help us face reality, Father, both now and at the hour of our death.

Building for the Ages

April 28

Some people might say that Roger Morigi spent a lifetime carving stones. He would call it building a cathedral.

The 70-year-old stone carver, soon to retire, has been working at Washington's Episcopal cathedral for the past 23 years.

In that time, he has carved the figures of Christ, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Olaf of Norway, Martin Luther and many other figures, including gargoyles.

Construction began on the cathedral in 1907, on the very day Morigi was born. Funds have since run out and the structure remains unfinished.

But Morigi is convinced this building will last a thousand years.

What are you building with your life? How good are the materials? How much loving attention do you give to details? In so much that we do, motivation makes the difference. Good or bad, it shows.

"Take trouble with details." (2 Macc. 2:30)

*Let us make something of our lives, Jesus,
and draw strength from the power of Your
love.*

She's Got One Beautiful Job

April 29

Carol Mullen has an unusual government job—she takes care of the flowers and shrubs around the county government center in St. Louis. She is known as the “flower lady.”

“I just couldn’t stand working at a desk where everything is manmade, like typewriters and computers,” the 20-year-old horticultural specialist once told an interviewer.

“Flowers and plants—they’re something that God just kind of does, and I like working with them.”

Dressed in a baggy shirt, jeans and a black derby, she tends the big potted plants inside the government buildings as well as outside. But her heart is outdoors. She has acquired detailed information on the thousands of tulips, mixed flower varieties and mums that provide a splash of colors for all to enjoy.

Not many jobs provide such an opportunity to cultivate that which is physically beautiful. But there are many kinds of beauty. A thoughtful act, a helping hand, a supportive word are all forms of beauty we can create in our lives.

“You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.” (Ps. 128:2)

Remind us to slow down, Creator, and take time to see the things You do.

Jail With a Human Touch

April 30

Because many women prisoners serving relatively short terms have small children, the women's detention center in Dade County, Florida, was designed to minimize negative emotional effects stemming from visits to parents.

The jail itself is often mistaken for an apartment complex or modern business offices. The design is clean and airy; the colors bright. Heavy plate glass substitutes for steel bars.

In minimum security areas, inmates are accorded as much privacy as possible. Women can lock themselves into their own rooms at night.

Explaining the concept, the architect and correction officials say, "We tried for a humanizing design."

Although it may be necessary to temporarily deprive people of certain rights for having violated the laws of society, there is never need to deprive them of their human dignity.

The more we can protect that dignity, the more likely that correctional efforts will be carried out successfully.

"I am the Lord . . . I have given you as a covenant to the people . . . to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon." (Isa. 42:6-7)

Father, help us to see the divine in all Your people, no matter what their circumstances.

Man Helps Protect Bluebirds

May 1

As a boy in Minnesota, Lawrence Zeleny used to see hundreds of sweetly singing bluebirds each spring.

Now 72, the former government chemist has devoted his retirement years in University Park, Md., to the preservation of the rapidly dwindling species.

Bluebirds have dropped in number for various reasons. Sparrows and starlings have driven the gentler birds from their nesting areas. And poisoning by various chemicals has further depleted their population.

With the help of 80 volunteers, Zeleny has set up trails of nesting boxes for bluebirds. Officials have credited the group with hatching 17,000 fledglings over the past eight years.

"I've worked harder than I've ever worked before," he says. "There's no money in it, but I think I am accomplishing more than when I was trying to make a living."

One person makes a difference. When you care enough, you can make a difference too. Whether it's in your family, at your job, in your neighborhood or world, ask God to help you care.

"Whatever good any one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord." (Eph. 6:8)

*Enlarge our hearts and widen our vision,
Father, so we may reach out to others with
love.*

Nurse's Idea Safeguards Babies

May 2

Nurse Vera Leonard feels that she and the babies under her care are ready for almost any emergency now that she has an "evacuation gown."

Mrs. Leonard used to wake up in the middle of the night worrying about the infants at Wesley Long Hospital, Greensboro, N. C. "What if there were a fire?" she wondered.

The hospital nursery is located on the fifth floor and sometimes cares for as many as 36 infants. But only two nurses and two aides are on duty at any one time. So Mrs. Leonard worried.

One night the solution popped into her head. Why not special gowns with six pouch-like pockets, each large enough to accommodate one infant?

Hospital authorities liked the idea and Mrs. Leonard made the special gowns herself. Now she sleeps more comfortably.

New parents themselves should sleep better knowing that there are people like this imaginative nurse caring for their babies.

All of us can bring creative thinking to bear on our own work. God may be trying to send some of His blessings to others through us.

"Do not hide your wisdom." (Sir. 4:23)

Preserve in us, God, a freshness of view that welcomes new ideas in ourselves and in other people.

A Problem for Libraries

May 3

Are there overdue library books hanging around your house? If so, you're part of a major problem.

The American Library Association recently surveyed 140 libraries. Each reported book losses of at least \$3,000. The New York Public Library estimates that it loses about 10 percent of all its circulated material.

Even electronic gate systems don't seem to stop the losses. "You'd be surprised how people get them out," said one librarian. "If they're going to steal, they're going to do it."

Textbooks and manuals appear to be the most popular items, but even huge city directories have been known to disappear.

If we try to be honest nowadays, we may feel we're out of step. But morality doesn't fluctuate with majority opinion although that opinion might make it difficult to form a right conscience. It's our job to develop a right conscience and to act on it.

"Have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things." (Heb. 13:18)

Let us act, Holy Spirit, on the basis of what we know is right, and not excuse ourselves by what others may do.

Hope Is Her Watchword

May 4

Eloise Moreland of St. Louis is a woman of hope. As director of the Emergency Children's Home (ECHO) she needs to be.

"I've had people say, 'Isn't it depressing, working with battered, neglected children?' " Miss Moreland told an interviewer.

"I tell them we're far from depressed here," she said. "We know we're helping the child. We've taken him out of a bad situation, cleaned him up, given him clothes and put him in school."

Children from ages 5 to 17 may stay at ECHO for up to 90 days, or until long-term care can be found. Some are brought in by police, who find them wandering in the streets. Others are remanded to the shelter by the courts.

Hope is needed the most when it is tested the most. It's easy to be cheerful when things are sailing along. But do we maintain a positive outlook when storms break all around us?

Fortunately, we are not alone. In the darkest moments, the light of divine hope can grow within us with the help of God.

"If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." (Rom. 8:25)

Lord, fill us with hope when we tend to despair.

What's in a Word?

May 5

Take an aggrieved psychologist, a state licensing examination, conflicting psychological theories and the intricacies of the law, and what have you got? You have at the least a king-sized headache for the judge hearing the case and frustration for the court reporters.

At least that was so when Michael Baer, a 33-year-old Rochester, New York psychologist, sued to obtain a passing grade in a licensing exam he had failed by one point. Experts called by each side produced a tangle of scientific verbiage citing obscure theoretical points in varying schools of psychological thought.

One court stenographer gave up in the middle of the trial. So did another. A third, with tongue in cheek, muttered that by the time the psychologists were through he personally would need a psychiatrist.

This is an extreme, and fortunately rare, instance of failure to communicate. Words are useless if they mean nothing to the hearer. The meaning to strive for, in the home, at work, with friends, is understanding, concern, love.

**"For wisdom is known through speech, and education through the words of the tongue."
(Sir. 4:24)**

Lord, remind me that "how I say it" is important.

Most Effective of All: Love

May 6

Since 1962, hundreds of thousands of American parents have enrolled in special classes to learn how to be effective parents.

Among other things, Parent Effectiveness Training (P.E.T.), put forth in Dr. Thomas Gordon's textbook on the subject, attempts to show parents how to help youngsters solve their own problems.

At a P.E.T. class in Roslyn, N. Y., a mother told of a problem-solving session in her family. Her 3½-year-old daughter was making so much noise that the mother and her six-year-old son couldn't hear the television.

"Let's problem solve," the mother suggested. "Okay," the boy agreed. "We can lock her in her room . . . We can kick her out of the house . . . We can . . ."

At this point his sister suggested, "Why don't I just shut up?"

There are effective techniques for improving communication. But the first thing we need in the family is love. Love opens us to others, makes us listen more sensitively and with respect. Love breaks down barriers.

"Love one another earnestly from the heart." (1 Pet. 1:22)

Lord, may Your love fill my heart so that I may better respond to the needs of my family.

Time for Living

May 7

Which animal has the longest life span? According to the head of the Helsinki zoo, it is the Galapagos Islands turtle, which may live to be 200.

Dr. Ilkka Koivisto has researched the ultimate ages of dozens of animals, fish, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

Among the mammals, man lives the longest—anywhere up to 110 years or more. Elephants may live to be 75, whales close to 70, horses 55, chimpanzees 51, lions 29 and giraffes 28.

A common way of telling an animal's age, says Dr. Koivisto, is to study its teeth. Birds show their age by the color of their feathers. Fish give it away by their scales and annual changes in their bones.

However, the length of our life isn't as important as how well we live it. Would we live differently if we knew the exact number of years, months or days that remain to us? Would we see things in better perspective, care a little more, love a bit better?

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.” (Mt. 25:13)

Increase our sense of the importance of time, Father, because we have less of it each passing day.

He Cares About Older Persons

May 8

Bill Mearns has done a lot of things around his home town of Liberty, Tex.

He was once a used car dealer and president of the Chamber of Commerce. Once he was named Citizen of the Year. Now he's in the car rental business and sits on the City Council.

But his one special love is older persons.

Each Wednesday, Bill Mearns provides free lunch for about 75 older persons at a hall he rents for the purpose. What isn't donated by local organizations he pays for himself. After lunch, his guests play cards, bingo, dominoes or pool.

When he was 40, Bill Mearns suffered a heart attack. Later, he underwent open heart surgery. A kidney ailment requires that he be linked to a dialysis machine at home for four hours every two days.

Nothing makes us more empathetic with the pains and sorrows of others than troubles of our own. We can see suffering as a total waste. Or we can look on it in part as an opportunity to put us in closer touch with God, ourselves and those who may need us.

"I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content." (Phil. 4:11)

*Help us to accept our disabilities, Father,
and still look outward to the needs of others.*

Teenager Stuns Experts

May 9

Fifteen-year-old Alan Lampert of New York is a firm believer in solar energy. And he's doing something about it.

As a result of experiments he conducted in the ninth grade, he found that certain rays of the solar spectrum produce more sugar—and hence more energy—than others. By the time he was a high school junior, Alan was at about the same point in solar energy research as a multi-million dollar AT&T project in New Mexico.

"It's incredible," said William Draper, energy coordinator for AT&T. "He's working on the same thing we are."

Alan's future plans? "I don't know," he says. "I'll probably go into science, or medicine, or research." Then after a pause: "I'll have to go to college first."

How many future scientists—male or female—may never get started early enough because some older person didn't encourage them? To open a youthful mind to any portion of God's truth is a tremendous service.

**"Lead me in Your truth, and teach me."
(Ps. 25:5)**

Enable us to be more communicative with youth, God, and let them know we're on their side.

A New Look at Grandma

May 10

Family members need to get acquainted with each other, according to family therapist Virginia Satir.

Often all that we know is the role the other fills in the family, says Ms. Satir, not the person behind it. In her book *Peoplemaking*, she tells of one family who came in to see her:

"Ethel, the wife in the family, brought her 73-year-old mother, who was introduced to me as 'Grandma.' I looked at her when I took her hand, and I asked her what her name was. At first she looked at me blankly, and then finally, after a few moments, said very softly, 'Anita.' So I said to her, 'Hello, Anita.'

"At this point the tears streamed down her face. She said it was the first time she had heard her given name in almost 20 years."

Seeing Anita as a person, not just a grandmother, was an important factor in that family's learning how to work together as people.

Take a new look at the people in your family. Wonder a little about what they experienced today, what they are feeling now, what they need from you. Look with love.

"As I have loved you, you also love one another." (John 13:34)

Help me to love enough, Jesus, to go beyond the familiar face and voice to see the person.

From House Builder to Doctor

May 11

A world-famous expert on leprosy—now called Hansen's Disease—started out wanting to be a house builder.

Paul Wilson Brand changed his mind during his twenties, when a course in first-aid turned his mind toward medicine.

"I got excited," he said, "about the potential for helping people."

Dr. Brand, director of the rehabilitation section of the Public Health Service Hospital in Carville, La., notes that certain drugs can arrest Hansen's Disease, and that corrective surgery can make limbs more usable.

Still, he says, "It is shocking, but there was more leprosy worldwide in the 1960's than in the 1950's." The number of sufferers is now about 15 million, with 3,000 persons in the United States afflicted with the disease.

Dr. Brand is optimistic, observing: "Patients can be returned to society as independent wage-earning, tax-paying citizens."

God may use the small incidents in our lives to nudge us in the direction where we can do the most good.

"As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men." (Gal. 6:10)

Don't let us sit around passively waiting for things to happen, Lord. Help us to make them happen.

Stores Cut Food Costs

May 12

Two supermarket chains in the New York area, following the lead of the Jewel Food Stores of Chicago, have started introducing "no name" or "no frills" food products at lower prices.

One national brand sells pork and beans for 29 cents. The store brand is 25 cents, and the "no name" brand, just 23 cents.

The food is still good quality and inflation-conscious shoppers find Pathmark and Waldbaum's new prices "appetizing."

"It's a terrific development," commented Rosemary Pooler, head of New York State's Consumer Protection Board. "It's about time stores started cutting the 'benefits' like packaging and advertising that consumers never wanted."

Advertising has its place, but so does economy. Inflation has made us more conscious of how wasteful we have been with money and with the goods of God's creation.

We could all be more careful about the way we spend our time, our money and our resources.

"Stop and consider the wondrous works of God." (Job 37:14)

*Inspire us to be more thoughtful, Lord,
about the way in which we use the things
You have given us.*

Small of Stature, Big of Heart

May 13

Michael Lee Gogin, 23, is a small man with a big talent. The four-foot-three-inch musician, who weighs 90 pounds, leads his own rock group called "Gogin with Stature."

"It may sound funny," he says, "but I've never noticed my height difference. The reason I feel that way is that I got an awful lot of love and affection from my parents, who told me to go out and project myself, but don't hurt anyone while you're doing it."

When Gogin was born, he wasn't expected to live. On crutches for 16 years because he had such small legs and no hip joints, he had two plastic hip implants as a teenager. He now swims competitively, plays ping-pong and softball.

"I don't like the term 'physically handicapped.' It's just that some people can do things a little better than I can, but I can do some things better than others. Everyone is handicapped in some way."

Parents give more than physical life. They can provide the life of the spirit to their children. This is an outpouring of the Spirit of God available to all.

**"I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh."
(Joel 2:28)**

Pour out Your spirit on us, Holy Spirit, and fill us with the love that is at the heart of God.

A New Idea: Rent-a-Goat

May 14

Out in El Cajon, Cal., Harold Norris rents goats to property owners who need the grass and weeds trimmed in hard-to-reach spots.

Norris got the idea when he was doing consulting work for a non-profit organization that sought to introduce goats into Indian reservations that were not suitable for cattle.

His big chance came after a year of heavy rain in San Diego County, which left heavy underbrush in many canyons. To reduce the danger of brushfires, property owners have usually cut the growth by hand and hauled it out. But the rainy weather made the task more burdensome than usual.

"A pair of goats will eat up all the weeds in a 100-foot-square area in two weeks," explains Norris, "and afterwards there's nothing to haul away because the goat droppings make great fertilizer."

There is always room for one more enterprising thinker. Do you have a problem that some creative thought could solve? Take the time to analyze possible solutions. Your answer may not be a billy goat, but it could very well be the equivalent.

"Keep sound wisdom and discretion . . . Then you will walk on your way securely and your foot will not stumble." (Prov. 3:21-23)

Stimulate our imaginations, Father, so that we may respond creatively to opportunities we might otherwise overlook.

Helpful Hints for Exam Jitters

May 15

Did your heart beat faster and your hands become clammy when you took exams in school? Then you will appreciate what Prof. Iris Fodor of New York University is trying to do for today's anxiety-prone students.

As a result of an experimental program designed to put the student back in control, Prof. Fodor offers these tips:

- As soon as you feel tense, try to escape mentally to a sunny beach, hot tub or other relaxing situation.
- Breathe deeply and slowly until you feel at ease.
- Stop any negative thinking at once.
- Be realistic. Life will not be ruined if you flunk one test.
- Use humor. Exaggerate the situation until it becomes ridiculous.

Finally, she says, don't be too hard on yourself. "It's destructive and it never seems to help."

Good advice for any situation. If we have prepared well for life's critical tests, we can leave the rest to God.

"Have no fear." (Mt. 17:7)

Give us the power, Lord, to meet life's challenges as they come and to prepare for them thoroughly.

Llamas in the Middle of Oregon?

May 16

Llamas are native to the Andes, but you can find a herd of more than 400 in a pasture amid the mountain pines near Sisters, Ore.

Richard Patterson started raising llamas in 1958 as a hobby. Now he's doing a thriving business on his 350-acre pastureland. There is a waiting list of 230 people for the South American beasts of burden. A male llama sells for \$500 and a female for up to \$2,000.

"They grow to roughly 350 pounds and measure about 42 inches in height," notes Patterson. "In South America, where they travel in pack trains, they can carry 90 pounds for about 30 miles a day. They can withstand just about any elevation or type of climate."

Llamas live up to 20 years and can be raised for pets and for their wool as well as for their value as a pack animal.

There are as many ways to make a living as the human imagination can devise. How imaginative are you? Do you use your God-given creativity in helpful and constructive ways?

"There are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one." (1 Cor. 12:6)

Lord, help us to put our imagination to work in the service of others.

Elementary Business Education

May 17

High and Mel's Luncheonette serves as an unofficial adjunct to New York's Fifteenth St. School. But so much an aspect of education has it become that students and school officials alike held a special celebration to honor the owners for their service to the neighborhood.

At the celebration, a citation was given to Hyman and Mel Chesner in recognition of their "neighborliness, patience and good humor."

The Chesners allow students to come behind the counter, operate the cash register, make malteds and learn something about operating a luncheonette.

"Sometimes I think it's almost like we're giving a course," explains High Chesner. He says their goal at the store is "to serve good food at a decent price and, when we're able, to let the children be aware of selling and serving food and running a business."

The neighborhood is a good place to begin in making this a better world. What are the most pressing needs on your block? Which are you most qualified to meet? We show our love for God and neighbor by what we do.

**"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
(Mt. 19:19)**

Enlarge our vision, Lord, but help us realize that opportunities for loving are close at hand.

First Goal: Achieving the Possible

May 18

Louise Lundblad is one of 27 Xerox Corp. workers getting a year's paid leave to engage in social service programs.

An editor for the company's Learning Systems Division, Ms. Lundblad, 30, will try to help severely disabled persons in Connecticut live with greater independence although she herself is unable to walk. Her arms and hands were also weakened in the accident that deprived her of the use of her legs.

"A severely disabled person now has only two lifestyle choices," she said. "One is to return home and be cared for by the family and the other is to enter an institution."

During her year's service, Ms. Lundblad hopes to live with other handicapped persons so that they may live and work together as normally as possible.

"The emphasis will be on ability," she said, "not disability."

What is ability? It's what you and I can do, not what we can't. What we can do may be much less than what another can. But, with God's help it is possible for each individual to reach his or her potential.

"I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13)

*Focus our sights, Jesus, on what we can do.
Keep us from worrying about what we can't.*

Dandelions Are Beautiful

May 19

Renowned writer G. K. Chesterton chose the dandelion, that disdained weed, as a symbol of his gratitude for the simple natural things of life.

He abhorred "the strange and staggering heresy that every human being has a right to dandelions . . . and need feel no wonder at them at all." Chesterton concluded, "The aim of life is appreciation."

We are surrounded by an almost endless variety of natural wonders. How often do we pause to notice them, to thank their Creator, the Giver of all good things?

Your life may seem flat, uninteresting, bound to repetitious work. You may feel deprived if you cannot afford the latest gadget, or take expensive vacations.

Look around you: every season offers you free gifts, the green beauty of springtime, the flowers of summer, the colorful trees of autumn, the snowflakes of winter. Consider what a dreary place the world would be without its colors, shapes and sounds.

Pick a dandelion today—and thank God for life!

"The Author of beauty created them." (Wis. 13:3)

Lord, help us rise from the beauty of Your creation to the splendor of Your actual presence.

Business Looks at Mental Health

May 20

Offices and factories throughout the country are providing mental health specialists to assist executives and employees with needed counseling.

It's not necessarily altruistic on the part of management. People with personal problems are out of work more often. Frequently they don't do as good a job as they could.

But, says Andy Weissman, a social worker who helps people for U.S. Steel in Chicago, "Almost every program I've seen has come about because someone in management wanted to do something for everybody else."

James Manuso, a psychologist for Equitable Life Assurance in New York, predicts that employee emotional counseling will become routine in most firms. "In the next 10 to 15 years, it virtually will be a necessity for any organization to look at emotional health and stress levels of employees."

There used to be a stigma attached to admitting that we have emotional problems. Gradually that attitude is being replaced. If you have a difficulty you can't handle alone, don't hesitate to seek out someone—a qualified spiritual or psychological counselor—with whom to talk things over.

"Comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." (2 Cor. 1:4)

Keep us from being too proud or too timid to ask for help, Jesus.

From Banker to Handyman

May 21

Bob Aiken used to be a trust officer at a bank in the nation's capital. Now he's a maintenance man at a 90-unit apartment complex in a racially mixed section of Washington.

Aikin, who is white, is a member of the small Church of Our Savior, a black congregation which purchased two run-down apartment buildings in order to rehabilitate them. Because of his involvement in the rehabilitation program, he became the first white person many of the 300 tenants felt they knew and could trust.

"Their joy and sorrow are my own," said Aikin, 31, who took a cut of more than fifty percent in salary to accept the maintenance job. Besides keeping the apartments in working order, Aikin gives financial advice and sometimes personal direction to tenants and those who run the apartments.

"God sent me here," he feels.

Do you feel that God sent you to your neighborhood, your job? His power can sustain you in your mission in life.

"Go, do all that is in your heart; for the Lord is with you." (2 Sam. 7:3)

*Increase our trust in Your goodness, Father,
and make us the sort of person others can
believe in.*

Looking at Problems in a New Way

May 22

Did you know that half of eight is zero? Or, looked at another way, half of eight is three? So says Sidney Parnes, president of the Creative Education Foundation at Buffalo State College, New York.

The upper and lower halves of the figure 8 are both zeroes—and dividing the figure vertically would give you two threes (one of them backwards, of course).

Every year, people come from all over the world to learn problem-solving for their lives, businesses or careers at the foundation, which was established in 1954 by the late Alex Osborn, father of “brainstorming.”

Parnes teaches creativity in five steps: defining the facts, deciding what the problem is, brainstorming for solutions, deciding on one solution and then seeing if it is practical.

The joy of discovery is the result of looking at problems in unusual ways. Before you start, offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit to help unleash your creative energies.

“I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also.” (1 Cor. 14:15)

Grant us, Spirit of God, a freshness of vision, a depth of purpose and a driving force of love.

Ex-Cons Turn to Teaching

May 23

Delancey Street is a San Francisco rehabilitation program run by former convicts. It is a self-help foundation consisting of 360 members.

Now Delancey Street is helping the city's police.

Police recruits are put through 17 weeks of intensive training, with four weeks of role-playing in which Delancey Street members teach the rookies the tricks used by criminals.

The recruits are introduced to common situations in which they learn how to cope with lying witnesses, con-games and hostile crowds. The police quickly learn the ways of the street.

Why do the ex-convicts do it? "I want these streets cleaner than the cops do," said one Delancey Street member, "because it's my kids that end up victimized—on dope and doing the crimes and going to jail. We're the ones who have the most to lose."

Nobody knows the results of criminal activity better than ex-criminals. The right kind of rehabilitation doesn't "coddle criminals." It helps them become deterrents to criminal activity.

**"Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence which is in his hands."
(Jon. 3:8)**

Help us to be honest in what we think and do, Jesus, so that we carry Your love into the world.

Consumers Band Together

May 24

Hundreds of consumer groups have sprung up all over the country in recent years. The former Department of Health, Education and Welfare provided \$4 million a year to help them and offers these tips on effective organization:

- Build a dues-paying membership.
- Publish a newsletter—even a simple mimeographed sheet.
- Involve new members in projects right away.
- Don't lose sight of pocketbook issues. Legislative actions are important, but hard to relate to members' needs.
- Give individual members the credit they deserve.
- Don't rely on a single source for funding.
- Operate in a businesslike manner. Prepare a budget and stick to it. Incorporate as soon as possible.

Indignation over the lot of the consumer is never enough. To get things done, organization is necessary. You could start by drawing up a list of friends with whom you could achieve some public-spirited goal that would benefit your community and world.

"The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance." (Prov. 21:5)

Inspire us, Lord, to sit down and plan efficiently for the goals we hold dear.

Memorial Day

May 25

The National Anthem. It's played at the opening of baseball games and at most other sports events in the United States. It's played when an American wins a gold medal at the Olympic Games. It's played at commencement exercises. And it's a staple at patriotic celebrations.

On Memorial Day it evokes feelings of gratitude mixed with sadness as we remember those who have died to preserve liberty. The display of the flag that day reminds us that the "Star Spangled Banner" does indeed "wave in the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Jack Guildroy, a retired high school guidance counselor, recalls how as a young boy of 11, he "proudly carried the heavy staff and the American flag" in his hometown Memorial Day parade. That image calls up another: that of the young soldier racing through a battlefield proudly carrying the American flag in Stephen Crane's Civil War novel, "The Red Badge of Courage."

Acts of courage often go unnoticed. It's good to acknowledge them and to remember before God all those individuals who gave their lives to promote freedom.

"Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you." (Josh. 1:10)

Father, let the memory of those who courageously defended human rights be a source of strength for us.

Handicapped Becoming Activists

May 26

A new militancy has developed among the 30 million Americans who have physical handicaps.

Organizations such as Mainstream, Inc., the National Federation of the Blind and the Paralyzed Veterans of America are demanding fundamental changes in the way society treats the handicapped.

One sign of progress is that federal regulations requiring physical access are being implemented—wide doors for wheelchairs, ramps, Braille signs.

But leaders of activist groups also want to remove feelings of pity for handicapped persons. "An incredible amount of paternalism has always greeted the handicapped," says Mrs. Leslie Milk of Mainstream.

"We should be defined by what we can do, not what we can't do," says Dr. Frank G. Bowe of the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.

There is no place for paternalism in our relation with any person. We need to respect each other, and each other's needs, as we respect ourselves.

"Give me understanding." (Ps. 119:34)

Give us perspective, Holy Spirit, to give others the respect they deserve.

The Cost of Losing Trees

May 27

What good are trees? The recent history of China answers that question.

During the last ten years, widespread felling of trees cut the annual rainfall in half in one mountainous region. And the average wind speed increased six m.p.h.

Overcutting near the Burmese border resulted in the loss of more than 300,000 acres of forest land. As a result, the weather in that tropic region has grown noticeably hotter.

Cutting of trees for farmland on the upper Yellow River resulted in silting up the lower reaches of the artery.

China has planted more than 69 million acres of trees since 1949, but only about one-third of the trees survived. Only 12.7 per cent of China is forested—half the world average.

“If better management is not introduced and trees are still cut and not replanted, in a dozen years’ time there will be no more forests,” a Chinese news report warned.

Environmental concern is not a hobby for the elite. It’s a matter of life and death for our planet and its people.

“To the Lord belong the earth and all it holds, the world and all who live in it.” (Ps. 24:1)

Inspire us to be more careful in our use of natural resources, Lord.

One Way to Say "I Care"

May 28

A psychology professor found that his hectic schedule lecturing on "how to be good parents and teachers," seemed to be affecting his son, a third-grader.

"I began to notice that I was not getting the same results with my boy that I used to," noted Prof. G. V. Scheviakov.

"I finally decided to take a day off and spend it alone with the boy on the beach. We played with balls and kelp and did all the things one does on the beach.

"At the end of the day I was completely exhausted and even my boy was kind of tired, but extremely happy. On the way home, he said quite suddenly, 'Didn't we have a good time?'

"After I agreed, he said, 'You know, I am going to do everything you ask me to do from now on.'"

There are many ways to influence a child's behavior. Many parents try to do it with sermonettes.

But the message the heart receives is more powerful than any transmitted to the mind. And if the message is love, you can't lose.

"Make love your aim." (1 Cor. 14:1)

Help me, Lord, to be always aware of the power of love.

Literacy in U.S. an Urgent Goal

May 29

There are all sorts of national goals. Putting a man on the moon was one. An urgent goal now, according to Alexander Burke, president of McGraw-Hill Book Company, is the elimination of functional illiteracy.

"If taken seriously," he claims, "it will require nothing less than a reassessment of national priorities." But Burke also believes that "the cost of not solving this problem may in the long run be even greater."

A functional illiterate is a person who cannot easily read a newspaper or a bus sign, fill out a job application or do many of the tasks necessary for living in society.

Burke urges that primary attention and funding be given "to making a competent reader of every student in American schools."

Problems such as these seem immune to individual action. But could each of us think in terms of teaching one person to become a better reader?

That would put no strain on the national budget. But it could help one person get a job and hold his or her head high.

"Every one when he is fully taught will be like his teacher." (Luke 6:40)

Give us the insight, Holy Spirit, to interpreting king-sized challenges in terms of what we can do on a one-to-one basis.

Easy-to-Find Survival Guide

May 30

How many times have you been frustrated because you couldn't lay your hands on a piece of vital information? In San Francisco you might find it in the phone book.

As a public service, Pacific Telephone and Telegraph has included an eight-page survival guide in the front of the book.

It contains information on rescue breathing, fractures, bleeding, poisoning, drug overdose and shock—even what to do in an earthquake.

Nine professional groups helped compile the guide. The phone company contributed space. As one official noted, outside the Bible the phone book "must be the most common book in homes."

In emergencies, every second counts. Have you thought about what to do, where to turn, in the event of fire or accident? A few minutes of thought now could avert tragedy later.

Come to think of it, there are tips for survival in the Bible too!

"I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for evil." (Jer. 29:11)

Give us the sense to plan ahead, Lord, so that we may not be caught napping.

Women's Deeds Fill Exhibit

May 31

Despite the misgivings of her colleagues, Deborah Warner, curator at the Smithsonian Institution, put together a full-sized exhibit of 19th century women scientists. Some of those featured were:

- Maria Mitchell of Vassar, America's first woman astronomer and a scientist who gained an international reputation.

- Ellen Henriette Swallow, a pioneer ecologist and home economist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After overcoming male resistance to her own studies, she set up chemistry courses for women.

- Florence Bascom, who became the first woman geologist in the U.S..

- Kate Furbish, a botanist who discovered a plant that bears her name. The plant's status as an endangered species nearly blocked construction of a dam in Maine.

In public and professional life, women are only now coming into their own. They can aspire to almost any calling that men now occupy. And why not? God created all persons as equals and that fact needs practical expression.

"You are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28)

Lord, never let us discourage anyone from aspiring to great achievement.



He Rests While Robot Mows

June 1

A robot lawnmower named Clarence will cut a $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre yard in an hour, return to the garage unassisted and shut its motor off.

It was invented by Clarence Nokes, 47, a Washington engineer and is expected to retail for about \$600. It took Nokes, a former Seabee and Howard University graduate, 12 years to perfect it.

The space-age mower looks like a canister vacuum cleaner with a plastic bubble and a bright orange flag on its antenna. It is electrically powered and programmed by computer to take a required number of turns in the right places.

If the machine bumps into any object weighing more than five pounds, it shuts off instantly. This avoids collisions with small children or animals.

Labor-saving devices are meant to relieve us of the drudgery of work. For God means us to work creatively, using our heads and hearts as well.

It's worthwhile stopping every once in awhile to consider an old saying: Work is prayer.

**"They keep stable the fabric of the world,
and their prayer is in the practice of their
trade." (Sir. 38:34)**

*Give us added zest in the work we do, Holy
Spirit, and guide our efforts to be of assist-
ance to others.*

New-Style Banana Split

June 2

Rich McCamish makes a living by shattering bananas and squeezing liquid out of thin air. He's not a magician, just a demonstrator for Pacific Gas & Electric.

"Watch what cryogenics (the science of super-cold temperatures) will do to something soft," McCamish will tell school groups and service clubs at a demonstration as he drops a banana into liquid nitrogen. Within seconds he removes the banana and shatters it against the table.

In a more practical demonstration, he blows up a balloon and drops it into the nitrogen, which has a temperature of minus 260 degrees. The balloon quickly shrinks, the gas in it having become liquified.

This shrinkage of a gas to 1/600th of its original size demonstrates how liquified natural gas (LNG) can be reduced in size for transport from thousands of miles away—Indonesia or Alaska, for example.

Man has uncovered many of the mysteries of the universe. But much more of God's creation awaits discovery. Poetry, science and faith all point to the luminous Intelligence that is the source of all life, mystery and the destiny of our world.

**"He binds up the waters in His thick clouds,
and the cloud is not rent under them." (Job
26:8)**

*Increase our sense of wonder, Holy Spirit,
so we don't take for granted what You have
created.*

Peanut Vendor With a Good Pitch

June 3

Even when the pitchers in Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles are having difficulty getting the ball across the plate, Roger Owens is likely to be throwing perfect strikes.

Owens has been tossing bags of peanuts to Dodger fans for 20 years. His performance is dazzling. Owens can sail his product 35 rows into the hands of a customer, whether he is throwing behind his back, over the shoulder or under a leg.

Owens makes about \$80 a game, selling up to 1,000 bags of goobers. "I've learned to communicate with all kinds of people," says the popular vendor. "I've tried to show people that through your own efforts you can make something of yourself."

Owens was married in 1976. When the wedding was announced over the Dodger loudspeaker system, many fans threw not rice, but peanuts at the pair.

Whether you're a peanut vendor, a pipe-fitter or a president, you communicate with people by the way you serve them. A cheerful, competent attitude can go a long way towards making what you do more than just a job.

"Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men." (Col. 3:23)

Jesus, remind us to take our jobs seriously enough to put extra effort into them.

Respect for Age Encouraged

June 4

You don't find many older persons featured in books for young children, according to researchers at the University of Maryland. But now schools around the country are trying to overcome the image of older persons as helpless or dull.

- At one school in California, kindergarten pupils are asked to bring to class a household item that might have been used by their grandparents. Each child gets the chance to explain the object in a show-and-tell session.

- At Ball State University in Indiana, a teacher-awareness program seeks to make teachers, counselors, librarians and adult education instructors more sensitive to the positive aspects of aging.

- Students in some school systems interview older persons with a tape recorder, or have classroom visits from, or field trips with, older persons.

Prejudice in any form makes no sense. But when it's directed at older persons, it's especially unfortunate because where they are, we soon will be. Appreciate all God's children, whether they're seven or seventy.

"Do not disregard the discourse of the aged . . . because from them you will gain understanding." (Sir. 8:9)

Remind me, Lord, that the older generation is part of my life.

Masked Marvel Becomes a Doctor

June 5

John Bonica worked his way through medical school 40 years ago by touring with carnivals during the summer as a professional wrestler called the Masked Marvel.

The injuries he suffered in the ring—torn hip joints, rib fractures and cauliflower ears—left him partially disabled. But as a result of his studies he is now one of the world's foremost experts on the control of pain.

Dr. Bonica has written 26 books and more than 200 papers on the subject.

In 1960, at the University of Washington, Dr. Bonica helped found the nation's first pain clinic. Specialists there are able to help about seventy percent of their patients and the others are taught to cope with the pain they have.

Pain still besets Dr. Bonica. "The only way I keep sane is by working 15 to 18 hours a day," he said.

One man through his sense of mission and dedication, turned his pain into a program for assisting others. Can you and I convert our problems into opportunities to serve? With God's help—we can.

"Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you." (Ps. 55:22)

Make us appreciate more deeply the gifts of life and health, Holy Spirit.

Quick-Change Church

June 6

Ivy Chapel, a United Church of Christ congregation in the St. Louis area, has been host to a small Reform Jewish group of worshipers every Sabbath since 1974. Each year the two congregations hold a joint Thanksgiving service.

These expressions of practical ecumenism are the work of the Rev. Dennis Lindberg and Rabbi Bruce Diamond of Congregation Kol Am.

"You go into big churches and they're empty most of the time," said Rabbi Diamond. "This place is being used all the time."

The sharing extends beyond the Sabbath observances. Basement rooms house pre-school in the morning, Hebrew school in the afternoon, Kol Am's religious school on Saturday morning and the Ivy Chapel Sunday school.

It takes about 20 minutes to convert the church sanctuary into a synagogue. Occasionally, as when the Passover coincides with Easter, adjustments have to be made.

Prejudice is based on ignorance; understanding is grounded in knowledge. How much do you know about how others worship God? He is one and the same for all.

"I appeal to you . . . that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10)

Lead us to be more faithful to our own religious traditions, Father, and to respect others.

A Letter for You

June 7

In a letter to the Corinthians (1:12:3-7, 12-13), St. Paul wrote:

“There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them.

“The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose.”

Each person is different because each person is chosen for God's own reasons. So the fruits of the gifts of each person will be different and irreplaceable, because they can come from no other person.

We use our gifts every day of our lives—in our families, in our work, among our friends, when we fulfill our duties as citizens, and as we add joy to the world.

With optimism and courage, enjoy life and contribute to it the best way you can. For you are chosen!

“My chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.” (Is. 65:22)

Remind me, God, that You had reasons for creating me.

Child's Accident Saves Family

June 8

A doctor's after-midnight house call saved a family of five from death by carbon monoxide poisoning.

The Ankabrandt family of Boiling Springs, Pa., went to bed one Saturday night with the coal furnace banked and the flue closed. They all had headaches and some became sick to their stomachs before retiring, without realizing the cause.

During the night, one of the Ankabrandt children got up groggy and fell down a flight of stairs. This awoke the family, and the father, who was least affected, called Dr. H. Robert Davis.

Dr. Davis arrived at 2 a.m. to find everyone in various stages of stupor.

Later Mrs. Ankabrandt said: "We would have died in our sleep. We were passed out . . . We just wanted to sleep and didn't care what happened."

Sometimes it takes a shock, like that child's fall down the stairs, to shake us from a potentially dangerous lethargy.

It's good to remember, when a serious upset comes into our lives, that it may be God's way of "waking us up."

"It is full time now for you to wake from sleep." (Rom. 13:11)

You have called us, Jesus, to be instruments of Your peace. Let us be alert when opportunity knocks.

Living in Harmony With Others

June 9

Leroy Vinnegar loves people. And he's been communicating that message through music for more than 30 years.

For Vinnegar, who plays bass at the Jazz Safari in Long Beach, Cal., music is not just a job. He sees it as a way of speaking to others. "When you can't talk to people any other way, you can always talk to 'em with music," says the 6-foot, 5-inch jazz great. "It clears a lot of barriers, a lot of hurdles. There ain't anybody that can't understand music."

Because he believes that, he spends his spare time encouraging youngsters to pursue their interests in music.

Music and people mean a lot to Leroy Vinnegar. "Both things are important to me," he admits, "but lovin' people is the most important."

God has given each of us special gifts to be used for the good of others. Music is only one of many ways to communicate with people. But the one that really counts is love. And each of us can speak that language.

**"Above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."
(Col. 3:14)**

May we use our gifts, Father, to express the love with which they have been given to us.

Victim Proves Doctors Wrong

June 10

Seventeen years ago, Norton Sanders had a stroke. Doctors told him he'd never walk again. Today he's not only walking, but he's traveling the country showing other stroke victims how they too can prove the doctors wrong.

The St. Louis man, 60, still can't move his left side. But his workshops, based on methods he found useful for overcoming the effects of stroke, keep him on the go.

With the expert help provided by the Rusk Institute in New York, Sanders was able—after three arduous years—to get out of his wheelchair and walk with a leg brace. The brace came off four years later. Then he taught himself how to swim.

Sanders works three days a week in public relations.

"I have striven to maintain independence," he says. "I have my hobbies, my interests, my friends. So what, if one side doesn't work?"

It's not easy to balance independence on the one hand with concern for people on the other. And it's the way we live, more than the words we say, that has the greatest influence. Ask God to help you attain that balance.

"Let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

Lord, help us to develop the determination to overcome adversity.

Speaking Out on Retirement

June 11

"I thought I would be happy without working but I am irritable and uneasy without anything to do." That complaint from a retired plant manager is typical of those from people who retired without any planning.

As another retiree states: "Retirement isn't the end. It's a beginning. Only recently have we awakened all the exciting opportunities in later life."

One man tells how he and his wife "sat down two years before retirement and made a master plan for retirement . . . It worked out splendidly."

"The happiest retired people are those who keep making friends," according to another retiree. "In this sense, no one should ever retire."

Every phase of life has its excitements and its drawbacks. Planning is essential to the retirement phase when money is likely to be a concern. Whatever your age, it makes sense to look ahead. Time is one of God's gifts. Use it well. Where you'll be tomorrow depends on how you plan today.

"So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom." (Ps. 90:12)

Lord, help me to value the present moment and to plan for the future.

Neighborhood Gets a Face-Lift

June 12

David Kramer of Cleveland proved once again that the caring individual can make a difference in the quality of our daily lives.

The summer before the 24-year-old student entered Harvard Business School, he decided he would beautify his "own little part of the world." He took \$1,500 out of the bank and invested it in 11,000 flower plants—allysum, marigolds and coleus.

He wanted to plant them along the median strip and in areas that needed some sprucing up. He asked neighbors for physical and financial aid. Many people turned out to help with the planting and within days he recovered half his original investment through donations.

Kramer and his co-workers toiled until 1:30 a.m. every night for a week. The city promised to aid the effort by providing park benches.

It's a good thing to beautify your own little part of the world. But, with God's help, we can also reach out more widely to the bigger world, which needs the love and service that each of us can offer.

"I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve." (Rev. 2:23)

Father, inspire us to lead lives that place a high value on the beauty of Your creation.

Put Yourself in Their Place

June 13

If you were blind and living alone, how would you distinguish a container of orange juice from one of milk? You could put a rubber band on one of the containers.

How would you know the temperature of a gas or electric oven? You would probably need a special dial on the range with grooves for certain temperatures.

Blind people depend on their ingenuity.

Several times a week about 100 visually impaired people come to a training session at a model apartment run by the Jewish Guild for the Blind in New York. During a specially designed course, they learn how to cook, clean house and take care of themselves.

Most of us just don't know what patience and persistence it takes for blind persons to cope with the ordinary business of living.

If such knowledge makes us more appreciative of the powers we have, it can also lead us to be more considerate of those persons who suffer impairment of one or more faculties.

"Do not withhold good from these to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it." (Prov. 3:27)

Increase our sensitivity, Jesus, to those whom You helped during Your lifetime.

Long Search Ends in Reunion

June 14

A cooperative tax preparer helped reunite a brother and sister who had been separated for 15 years, their family having been broken up and the seven children having been put in widely scattered foster homes.

Over the years, five of the seven children found each other and Sharon Bunch, 23, kept searching for the others.

One day she was visiting the office of a Michigan tax preparer. As was her habit, she scanned the list of names of other customers and caught sight of the name "Robert Bunch."

"Wow, that could be my brother," she said.

The tax man sent Robert a letter giving Sharon's phone number. Robert was indeed Sharon's brother. They had been living only a few miles from each other.

Said a friend of Sharon's who was aware of her constant searching: "It's an amazing thing to see a family, one by one, get together again."

Many pressures today keep families apart, physically or in spirit. Yet the drive for reunion is strong. Nurture the sparks of affection in your own family. Ask God for the strength to make blood ties lead to caring and sharing.

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Ps. 133:1)

Help us be more thankful for our families, Lord, and more willing to extend ourselves to keep them together.

Postmaster Did More Than Listen

June 15

Somehow, the 103 wedding invitations mailed by Kevin Staples in Houston, Tex., became lost, causing the prospective groom no little pain and embarrassment.

"My mom was frantic," Staples recalls. "The caterers wanted to know how many people were coming and she said no one had returned their RSVP."

He complained to the Postal Service. Officials were sympathetic. "We may lose an occasional letter in the machinery," said one, "but never an amount like that."

More than sympathy, the complaint got action. The Houston postmaster decided to pay personally for mailgrams to be sent to 80 out-of-town guests.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime occasion," said a postal official, "so the postmaster decided he ought to take appropriate action."

The wedding went ahead on schedule.

It's not enough just to listen to people's woes when we can do something constructive to help them.

"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only." (James 1:22)

Remind me, Lord, to make the added effort when called for.

Farming for Brooklynites

June 16

Three youngsters from Brooklyn, New York, have been milking cows.

Until two summers ago, Alfredo, Alexander and Jonathan Cruz had never seen sheep, chicken, cattle or horses. But after working on the Clove Creek farm in upstate New York, the three teenagers would like to leave Brooklyn and live permanently on a farm.

The Farm Program, part of the Fresh Air Fund, gives thousands of young people a taste of outdoor life.

"You can't just tell city youngsters to go weed a garden," says Lawrence Mickolic, director of the Fresh Air Fund. "First, you have to show them what a weed is," he adds, indicating the narrow horizons of inner city life.

Providing healthy opportunities for young people is a way of insuring a healthy future for the world. Maybe there is something you can do in your neighborhood for those youngsters who need a summer job.

"Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." (Mt. 9:38)

*Lord, Creator of nature and all good things,
help Your children appreciate Your bounty.*

Why Some People Are Drowsy

June 17

Some people can't get enough sleep at night and find themselves falling asleep during the day. In serious cases, they may have a little-known disorder called sleep apnea. It affects 50,000 Americans.

Clinical experts at New York's Montefiore Hospital study people's sleeping habits. By videotaping them while asleep and monitoring various bodily functions, clinicians have learned that some people wake up 400 times during the night. No wonder they're tired.

Sleep apnea can lead to low blood oxygen, high blood pressure, heart disease—even sudden death.

For some unknown reason, sufferers' upper respiratory muscles go limp while they're asleep and they literally stop breathing. Then they gasp for air and awake with a loud snore and a start.

A tracheotomy, which bypasses the blocked respiratory tract, is the only permanent relief.

Probably a lot of people with this disorder were thought to be "lazy" because of their drowsiness. We are often too quick to judge.

"Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." (John 7:24)

Holy Spirit, move us to give people the benefit of any doubt.

He Looked for the Best

June 18

Chuck Conners, who had worked in radio and the music business, opened a restaurant in a run-down area of St. Louis a few years ago, although the supply of available workers was no more promising than the neighborhood.

The work pool consisted of teenage dropouts who hung around street corners. "They needed help," says Conners, 38, "and I needed help with the restaurant."

He employs 20 teenagers part-time and says, "Generally, the whole thing has worked. People tell me it's wonderful what I'm doing for these guys, but I say it's wonderful what they're doing for me."

Conners has persuaded many of his young workers to stay in school and off the streets. He has become the legal guardian of two of them.

To bring out the best in others, show them how genuine is your need for them. Young and old are moved more readily by high expectations than they are by coercion or threats. Do you look for the best in others, as God does?

"For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:38)

Inspire us to be positive, Lord, and see the potential for good in others.

The American Way of Lateness

June 19

Being late for appointments seems to have become part of the American way of life.

In an informal survey, reporter Reginald Stuart of the New York Times found the trend to be common among lawyers, doctors, judges, barbers, beauticians—and customers.

“The customer’s attitude is always ‘I’m late, so what?’” said a New York hair stylist. “They could care less that they’re an hour late.”

Among the remedial steps being taken to discourage lateness are:

- Increasing the use of “double timing,” which means giving a customer a time to arrive but booking the appointment later if he or she is habitually late.
- Levying fines or penalties for being late.
- Using emotional appeals to get people to commit themselves to be punctual.

Lateness is disrespectful and inconsiderate. It causes inconvenience and perhaps loss of time and money for other people.

When it comes to meeting time commitments, do you “do unto others”? A little planning beforehand can get you “to the church”—or anywhere else—on time.

“And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.” (Luke 6:31)

Remind us to put ourselves in the other person’s position, Lord, so we don’t keep people waiting unnecessarily.

One Way to Control TV

June 20

Joanne and Ray Dobson of Larchmont, N.Y., did more than worry about the television viewing habits of their four children, who range in age up to 14.

With the aid of an engineer, the Dobsons invented a device called a video proctor. It resembles a pocket calculator, and it allows a parent to punch in the week's programs in advance. If a child tunes in a show that is "off limits," the screen goes blank.

Joanne Dobson got the idea after taking a course on the impact of TV on children. "I felt guilty," she said, "about not controlling the amount of television my kids watch."

Ray Dobson is promoting sales of the device.

"Parents have an obligation to act as a buffer against the impact of television," they both believe, "and not to use it as a baby-sitting tool."

Do you ever discuss television with your children? This kind of exchange can help support the values you are trying to give to your children and can provide you with an insight into their thinking.

"Children, observe instruction and be at peace." (Sir. 41:14)

Give light and strength to parents, Lord, in meeting contemporary problems.

Wanted: One Grandfather

June 21

A Cincinnati mother asked to place this ad in a newspaper:

“Wanted: One elderly lonely gentleman to be grandfather to woman and family. Only qualifications are that he needs to be needed and wants to be wanted. No experience necessary.”

The classified advertising department, sniffing a good story, transferred Louise Miller’s call to the news department and her story became a news item.

Mrs. Miller said she felt left out by not having known her own grandfather. “I’ve got a good husband,” she said, “and I’ve received a lot through my children. And I want to share that with someone.”

It’s a little far-fetched to advertise for a grandparent. But maybe this woman’s action can help us better appreciate our own grandparents, if we are fortunate enough to have them.

Families are for caring. Grandparents need to be needed and grandchildren need to be loved. It’s an opportunity for everyone to provide the support God intended for family life.

**“Grandchildren are the crown of the aged.”
(Prov. 17:6)**

*Holy Spirit, never let us take for granted
those You have made ours by family ties.*

Bartering Is on the Rise

June 22

Barter clubs are springing up around the country, especially in the West and South.

"Let's face it, if you have a skill, it's a lot easier to work something off than to pay cash for it," said a Florida dentist who got a swimming pool installed in return for extensive dental work.

A company in California uses computers, credit cards and monthly statements that allow members to use their bartered services as they would a checking account.

Some people regard barter as a return to simpler values. Others, in trading their skills for another's services, experience a growth in self-worth.

Do we stop once in awhile and ask ourselves how we value our own work? Do we perform up to our potential?

Being proud of our work, whatever it is, is one way to grow in self-respect. You can't barter self-respect, you can't even buy it.

"There is nothing better than that a man should enjoy his work." (Eccl. 3:22)

Lord, in the work we do, let us give full measure.

He Takes a Shine to His Work

June 23

James Archer, 37, shines shoes for a living—and he's proud of it. For the past 13 years he has run his three-chair stand in Miami International Airport.

"A lot of cats are ashamed," he says. "They don't want to be called 'shoeshine men.'"

"A job's a job," he adds. "It's what you have to do. You make the money to buy food and pay rent. When you go to the store to spend it, it's all the same—money."

Archer usually gets a dollar a shine and has 50 to 75 customers a day. With what he makes, he supports three children and a sister.

"There's no one as good as he is," one regular customer claims. Another raves: "It's the best shoeshine in America."

The dignity of work is really the dignity of the individual who performs it. There are no degrading jobs, though there are inhuman working conditions and labor that is shabbily performed. But work itself is an extension of the activity of the Creator Himself.

"Commit your work to the Lord." (Prov. 16:3)

Never let us be ashamed of the work we do, Lord.

Honesty in a Dishonest World

June 24

An expert in business security puts the blame for dishonesty squarely on the shoulders of management.

Saul D. Astor says that management dishonesty sets the tone and limits the effectiveness of steps taken to stop dishonesty at lower company levels.

Astor cites such practices as padded expense accounts, dummy invoices for goods and services never delivered, hidden slush funds, kickbacks and payments to relatives for phony services. Such activities, he contends, cannot be concealed from the rank-and-file.

"Honesty is intolerable in a dishonest atmosphere," says Astor. An executive or worker who tries to be honest is likely to be shoved aside or even fired. "You cannot identify with an immoral boss by being moral," he holds.

However, it's also true that dishonesty can't survive in an atmosphere where honesty prevails. Each of us can contribute to the climate of integrity at home and work.

"He who speaks the truth gives honest evidence." (Prov. 12:17)

Make us honest with ourselves, God, and help us to develop the determination to do what is right.

Hotline for the Deaf

June 25

Deaf people in Jefferson City, Mo., now have a hotline to their state officials, thanks to one man's persistence, and an understanding governor.

Bill Sheldon, deaf since birth, kept complaining to state officials that there was no way for deaf and speech-impaired persons to reach state offices quickly and get an answer.

With Gov. Joseph Teasdale's support, the telephone company set up a TTY (telephone typewriter) system in the State House. Now, by calling the TTY number, deaf persons can type out their questions or complaints and get an answer sent right back to them.

"For too long," said one state official, "the state of Missouri has been handicapped. Now there's a listening post in the governor's office."

It's a sign of progress in giving handicapped persons access to services others take for granted. Try to keep the needs of the handicapped high on your list of priorities. We can make a difference in their lives.

**"Judge your neighbor's feelings by your own, and in every matter be thoughtful."
(Sir. 31:15)**

Enlarge our vision, Father, so that looking at things from the viewpoint of others becomes second nature.

Skipper Saved Lives

June 26

A Filipino freighter captain who rescued 49 Vietnamese refugees in two separate incidents at sea was fearful that his actions could cost him his job.

About 5,000 refugees a month were making it to shore in Thailand or Malaysia at the time but at least as many never did.

Despite the fact that the law of the sea obliges ships to come to the rescue of any vessel in peril, increasing numbers of ships ignored the refugees because shipowners and operators were disturbed by the losses in time stemming from the unwillingness of Asian countries to let "boat people" ashore.

But when Captain Edgar A. Silverio learned that 14 other ships had passed by the damaged boat, Tomoco, without picking up its 31 passengers, he wrote the ship's owners:

"I did not hesitate to welcome them . . . for fear that I would be bothered by . . . guilt and anxiety if I had refused."

Taking a stand for human life may conflict with economic considerations. It is in these cases that our moral sense is put to the test. Life is God's gift. Do we treat it with respect?

"As your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the Lord." (1 Sam. 26:24)

*Strengthen us against any trends, Creator,
that go against the dignity of life from womb
to grave.*

Living Example for Drivers

June 27

Each semester John Wacker, 32, visits the driver education class at Ballard High School in Seattle and asks: "How many of you would like to trade places with me?" No hands are ever raised.

Wacker is a self-proclaimed example of the consequences of careless driving. He is blind in one eye, partially paralyzed, walks with a cane and speaks with difficulty.

Wacker's life nearly ended in 1963 when he was thrown from a speeding car and his head hit a telephone pole. He was hospitalized for years, spent his 21st birthday in a wheelchair that later gave way to a walker, crutches and finally a cane.

The driving school instructor, Mick McDonald, calls Wacker's presence "a gift of immeasurable value."

It takes a rare kind of courage for someone who has undergone such a frightful experience to present himself as an example to others.

Nothing is more powerful than the force of personal example and testimony. As you read this, you can remind yourself of the danger of ignoring safety on the road. Wacker's suffering has not been in vain, if it helps you to save yourself from a life of pain. Drive safely.

"Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps." (1 Pet. 2:21)

Holy Spirit, help us to weigh more carefully the consequences of what we do.

Trust in People

June 28

Chris Borgan, news correspondent for CBS television, tells how to gain people's trust.

"I have the same credo as a reporter that I had when I was a police officer:

"It is built around some very basic human values, like honesty and trust, and a deep feeling about the fundamental goodness of people. I don't lie to people, or use them, or dump on them, regardless of who they are."

"People on the street know this, and that is why they are not afraid to open up to me."

Chris Borgan sums up what is essential to human relationships—honesty and trust. Meeting people in a spirit of openness brings a positive response when it is coupled with mutual respect.

Sincerity is the best policy.

It's a good rule of life.

"The truth will make you free." (John 8:32)

Lord, help us to have confidence in the basic goodness of others.

Living With the Poor

June 29

Thomas Getman, legislative assistant to Senator Mark Hatfield, lives with his family in a minority neighborhood in Washington, D.C.

When they moved to the capital, they decided not to look for the conventional suburban house, but settled, instead, in an older row house in a racially mixed neighborhood.

They were convinced that their children could not learn social justice without first hand experience.

"We believe," they said, "that if our children can see us helping our neighbors in the name of Jesus, then more probably they will do the same.

"We have been given hope by Eliza's open-hearted willingness to share her lunch with her first-grade friends who have none; and by Andrew's desire to start an ecology club" to lessen the dangerous litter of broken glass on our sidewalks.

Each of us must find our own way to challenge economic and racial injustice.

How can I begin today?

"Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

Lord, help us to see how others live, so we may be able to help them effectively.

Couple Reforms Adoption System

June 30

Joyce and Peter Forsythe of Ann Arbor, Mich., got the run-around from social agencies when, with two children of their own, they sought to adopt another.

Instead of accepting the situation, the Forsythes decided to challenge the system. Today they have three adopted children of mixed racial background. More than that, they have changed the minds of social workers, judges and adoption officials.

They have lobbied with legislators, joined other adoptive parents, promoted their views on adoption through print and speaking engagements. And they have found money to finance these efforts.

As an official of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in New York, Peter Forsythe continues his crusade. Thousands of children have been placed in suitable families without regard to race, creed or cultural background.

Hard personal experience can spur needed improvements in society. Conviction, intelligence and hard work can make the most stubborn of bureaucracies responsive.

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones." (Mt. 18:10)

Don't let us accept obstacles at face value, Holy Spirit, but move us to use them as opportunities.

Wrecker, Spare That Building!

July 1

Preserving old buildings for use in today's world appears to be a trend that is catching on. Local and state historical societies, as well as federal agencies, are getting into the act. Some examples in New York State:

- An empty middle school in Oswego has been converted into housing units for the elderly.

- A vacant railroad building in Albany has become the headquarters of the State University.

- An old federal building in Rochester is now the city hall.

"Young people are getting turned on by historic preservation," said Robert T. Coles, an architect from Buffalo. "It's a significant trend," he added. "Maybe there's hope in the generation that is discovering the past."

As individuals and as a nation, what we are has a lot to do with who went before us and what they did—good and evil. What the future will be like depends a lot on what we—the present generation—do with God's help to make our world a better one.

"There is hope for your future, says the Lord." (Jer. 31:17)

*Let us learn from the past, Holy Spirit,
without staying there.*

He Never Stopped Learning

July 2

Dave Brodsky of Edison, N. J., has had a full life. He's been a boxer, a cab driver, a master of ceremonies at hotels and a hotel manager. Twelve years ago, at the age of 67, he became a cantor at his synagogue. Now he has completed graduate school.

Brodsky says he was inspired by his son's accomplishment in becoming a lawyer.

Of his decision to become a cantor, he says, "This was my first attempt to educate myself."

Two years later the native of Winograd, Russia, entered Middlesex County College and received a degree as an assistant physical therapist. He then obtained his B.A. and went on for a master's degree in political science.

It's never too late to get an education. But all of our life experiences can be educational if we learn from our mistakes, if we retain a lively curiosity about the world around us and if we remain open to new ideas.

The mind that seeks and the heart that loves are God's two most noble creations. He gives us the means. It's up to us to use them to provide a better life for all.

"Apply your mind to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge." (Prov. 23:12)

Father, keep us from getting trapped in a one-dimensional mode of existence.

"Fill 'er Up"—190 Proof

July 3

Driving and alcohol don't mix—unless the alcohol is in the gas tank of a car. In Sao Paolo, Brazil, telephone repairmen are using automobiles powered by 190-proof grain alcohol made from sugar cane.

It's part of a pilot program in that oil-poor nation's attempt to find substitutes for petroleum. If it works, Brazil may be spending well over a billion dollars in the next few years to construct alcohol-producing distilleries.

Brazil has oil reserves of only two years. Its import bill for fuel alone is more than \$4 billion a year. Experts estimate that half this amount could be saved if the nation's growing fleet of automobiles were burning something other than gasoline.

Conservation of the resources so generously provided by God has become today's imperative rather than a wishful-thinking goal for tomorrow. Our responsibilities for good stewardship don't end with our generation but extend to generations yet unborn.

"It is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy." (1 Cor. 4:2)

Don't let us procrastinate, Lord, in matters that relate to the work of Your creation.

America: She Loves It

July 4

New Orleans' worst floods in 30 years couldn't stop Yvette Bouffard from becoming a U.S. citizen.

Ms. Bouffard, a Canadian, waded through water that was at times waist deep in her six-mile struggle to reach the district court for the swearing-in ceremony. All public transportation had been knocked out by the floods.

Ms. Bouffard arrived 90 minutes late for the event in which 50 other people became citizens. Soaking wet, she changed into a spare set of clothing she had taken along.

When district court judge Morey Sear heard about her arduous journey, he put his robes back on and swore her in privately.

Citizenship is basically a status conferred on a person who agrees to perform certain duties in return for the protection of certain rights. But what a treasure it was for Yvette Bouffard.

Her appreciation of this country is an example for all of us. What privileged people we are to be living in America.

"Give thanks in all circumstances." (1 Thess. 5:18)

Make us more aware of the blessings in our lives, Lord, especially the ones we take for granted.

Lives as a Patient

July 5

Albert Boerman, a physician, was born in Holland nearly 60 years ago. In 1940, though not a Jew himself, he began smuggling Jews to safety under the noses of the Nazis. He was caught, brutalized and put into a forced labor camp. It was a miracle that he survived the war to eventually become the chief psychiatrist at a mental hospital in Sweden.

His patients are convicted murderers, rapists, thieves and rioters but Dr. Boerman lives on the hospital grounds, sharing with his wife a single room the same size as the inmates' quarters, with two single cots and a wash stand in the corner. Why does he do this?

He tried to explain, "When you've been chased by police, captured in the middle of the night, beaten and tortured to the edge of life and sold into slavery . . . only then do you know what suffering really is. My heart doesn't go out to them (the patients). I am them."

Albert Boerman understands his patients. He has become one with them, a friend. His success as a healer is consistently high. More than one-third of the inmates are eventually released without a recurrence of crime or violence. Great sacrifice comes from great love, and it is great love that produces abundant good fruit.

"It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more." (Phil. 1:9)

Father, fill us with understanding for those whose anguish and circumstances we cannot share.

Conversation With a Child

July 6

James D. White has written a book entitled *Talking With a Child*. The key word is "with." So many of us talk "to" children.

The book, says reviewer Judith Helmud in *Publishers Weekly*, "will sensitize you to the child's world of feelings, needs, thoughts and opinions and will enable you to build a closer relationship with the child, while increasing his or her language proficiency."

A major concern of the author is that many children have little opportunity for actual conversation with adults. With humor and common sense, he shows us how to help youngsters become conversationalists.

White stresses the need for what he calls, "togethering." In a cartoon a child says, "My Dad and I had words this morning, but I didn't get to use mine."

The adult who listens can enjoy the child's freshness of viewpoint and will find that the youngster is learning to listen, too. It's a boost to a child's self-esteem to feel that what he or she has to say is worth hearing. Try "togethering." We could all use it.

"Little children, you are of God." (1 Jn. 4:4)

Help me to remember, Lord, that each person has the dignity of being Your child.

Refugee at the Age of 98

July 7

Phan Thi Ly may be the oldest of the thousands of "boat people" who fled Vietnam in the years after the fall of Saigon.

Born in the time when emperors ruled her country, Mrs. Ly, 98, was picked up with 36 other refugees, half of them her relatives, by the American frigate Hammond off the Thai coast.

"She's a tough lady," said an admiring young sailor.

"She appeared a little confused at first," commented the ship's executive officer. "But not for long. She comes out with a terse statement and everyone runs in four directions. She's definitely in charge."

Mrs. Ly has a son in California and a daughter in Denver. It was a desire to see them again, coupled with her opposition to Communism and the existence of food shortages, that led her to leave Vietnam last summer.

"I want to live to be 100," she told the cheering crew aboard the American vessel.

Long life depends on many factors; with motivation—having a purpose for existence—being among them. God supplies the "toughness" when we try to live for others.

"Glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good." (Rom. 2:10)

Grant us the determination to share what you have given us; Jesus.

Doctor Helps "Scared" People

July 8

Agoraphobia literally means "fear of the marketplace." About four million people in this country suffer from it.

Dr. Arthur B. Hardy, 65, treats such persons. He conducts 15 centers across the country, helping people cope with the panic that grips them outside the confines of their home.

Agoraphobia usually hits young adults and can stem from an upbringing in which parents or brothers and sisters criticized them for showing their feelings.

In Dr. Hardy's seminars, people are often helped by those who have overcome the affliction. They are encouraged to do the thing they fear—and gradually they find the "sky doesn't fall."

"It is strictly self-help," said the Menlo Park, Cal., psychiatrist. "I put the tools in their hands, but they have to do it themselves."

Is there something you're afraid of? By prudently trying to face your fears, with God's help and the assistance of competent persons, you may learn to overcome them.

"We can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid.' " (Heb. 13:6)

Take away our fears, Holy Spirit, so we can better serve You in a world that needs our finest efforts.

Employer's Trust Pays Off

July 9

Bob Packard, owner of a motorcycle shop near Los Angeles, made a wise decision the day he hired Donald Jensen as a mechanic. And he knows it.

"He can fix a tire faster than any of our nine employees, and is a whiz at electronics," says Packard.

Jensen, 37, is a mentally retarded person who had spent all but five years of his life in an institution.

"I was skeptical about hiring Donald," Packard admits, "because I had never worked with a retarded person before."

Although he requires a little more supervision than the other employees and can't read, Jensen makes complicated repairs, seldom makes mistakes and has a perfect attendance record over five years. He lives with a family and comes 15 miles to work each day on his bicycle.

"Fixing a motorcycle is a lot of fun. I love my job," says Jensen. He is saving up to buy a camper.

If more employers showed a willingness to hire retarded persons, fewer would have to live in institutions. The positive attitude of Bob Packard is something all of us could imitate.

"He has filled them with ability to do every sort of work." (Ex. 35:35)

Help us to put greater faith in each other, Father, because You place so much confidence in us.

Love Makes the World Go 'round

July 10

Friendship between a Spanish family in Madrid and an American family in Syracuse, N. Y., resulted in an exchange program for youngsters aged 8 to 15 in both countries.

The Ameri-Espana Exchange Program began when young Mark Labandeira came from Spain to stay for six weeks with the Longuil family of Syracuse, while teenager Robyn Longuil visited the Labandeiras. The children learned their host country's language and culture so well, their families decided to help set up a program for other interested families.

Both the Labandeiras and the Longuils help plan and monitor the Ameri-Espana Exchange Program now. They keep close contact with host families, and Mrs. Labandeira accompanies the children on flights to and from Spain.

People are the same the world over. The differences in cultures are "fringe benefits" for us to enjoy, if we just make the effort to learn more about them. And understanding nurtures love and brings peace.

"May the Lord grant you discretion and understanding." (1 Chron. 22:12)

God, help me to be more understanding.

Risks Life Despite Heart Condition

July 11

Bill Saak, a strapping six-footer who weighs 230 pounds, tore the sun roof off a burning car in Oklahoma City to save the life of a trapped driver.

What made his feat more remarkable was that he had undergone open-heart surgery 18 months before and was ordered not even to mow the lawn.

The accident occurred when a small car driven by Robin Pierce hit Saak's car from behind, smashed into a tree and burst into flames.

Saak and others who stopped couldn't open the door to rescue the driver, whose legs were pinned under the steering wheel.

A witness of the feat said that Saak, an Episcopal deacon, "somehow got his fingers under the glass of a window and literally ripped it off." Then he collapsed.

Both victim and rescuer were hospitalized in serious condition.

A heroic response to emergencies always makes news. In such circumstances, disregard for personal safety is a manifestation of God's love acting through another person.

"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

Father, as we reflect on Your unchanging love, make us more ready to come to the aid of those who need us.

Jingle Helps Prevent Cavities

July 12

For youngsters, brushing teeth and the development of good dental hygiene can be fun—at least if they use the jingle devised by seniors at the School of Dentistry at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

More than a thousand youngsters just learning to brush their teeth were taught this little jingle: “One, two, three, wiggle, jiggle, jiggle . . .” On “one, two, three,” they brushed up and down. On “wiggle, jiggle, jiggle,” they brushed across the gum line.

The result? At the end of the program, there was a 50 percent reduction in plaque—the villain behind most dental problems.

The good teacher finds ways that are fun to help students become better learners. That requires a love for the subject, and a careful regard for those who hear the message.

One effective way to get a message across is to share a personal experience so others may profit from it.

“They are to teach what is good.” (Titus 2:3)

Holy Spirit, help us to develop lively ways of conveying knowledge to those who look to us for instruction.

Together Again After 54 Years

July 13

One couple whose teenage marriage ended in divorce in the 1920s gave it a second try 54 years later.

Over the years of their long separation, the second spouse of each died. They never met again, except for a chance encounter in 1941.

But Levi Geer, 73, a heavy-equipment operator from Crossroads, Va., never forgot his first wife Dorothy. Recently, he located her in South Carolina after a diligent search and discovered that "she had been thinking of me all the time."

"I thought it was providential that they got together after all these years," said the Rev. Ernest Bell, who performed the ceremony. "They were teenagers before, young, immature and with strong wills."

Some teenage marriages do work out, but many of them do not. Increasingly, churches are insisting on thorough preparation and maturity of outlook in addition to providing comprehensive instruction.

In our tradition, marriage is likened to God's love for His people. Too much is at stake for this lifelong bond to be entered into in a hurried or thoughtless way.

**"Let marriage be held in honor among all."
(Heb. 13:4)**

Help us think before we act, Father, especially in matters of great import.

Young, Old Are Complementary

July 14

Teenagers across the country are enabling older persons to maintain their independence by performing services for them.

- Debbie Barnett of Hico, Tex., runs errands and cleans for two women, 84 and 94. "Neither one of them wants to go to a nursing home," she said. "And, without me, they probably would. It makes me feel really good to know I can help them."

- Paul Barton of San Diego, Cal., is a magician and he takes his magic show to convalescent homes.

- Amber Biddle, 17, persuaded other students to hold monthly birthday celebrations at residences for older persons in Rew, Pa.

"They love us," says Amber. "They'll join in with us and play along on their instruments. They tell us stories about when they were our age, and give us advice."

Youth and age need each other. Exuberance needs wisdom. Experience needs freshness.

Encourage the young people you know to spend time with older persons, to ask them questions, to make life easier for them in small ways or large. That's lighting a candle.

"Do not disregard the discourse of the aged . . . because from them you will gain understanding." (Sir. 8:9)

Lord, remind me that older persons were once my age.

A Special Kind of Cookbook

July 15

Vicki Lansky is a mother who doesn't like to cook. But she has written two cookbooks.

The Minnetonka, Minn., woman's most recent volume is called "The Taming of the C.A.N.D.Y. Monster." It was inspired by her two children's craving for sweets. Her main targets are excess sugar and salt.

"You don't have to give up everything," she says. "Look at your total diet and make reasonable choices."

Her recipes give appealing alternatives to parents whose children crave "junk food."

"I'm a mother first," says Mrs. Lansky. "I never wanted to be a working mother. I don't see myself as a writer. I write like I'm talking over a cup of coffee. To me, that's not writing, that's sharing."

Communication always means sharing.

When we communicate—whether it is by writing, by word of mouth or even a glance—do we do it with love? God has given each of us a capacity for good. Let's share as far as we can reach.

"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer every one." (Col. 4:6)

When we have information that may be helpful to others, Lord, don't let us keep it to ourselves.

Help Available for Wife-Beaters

July 16

The "battered wife" syndrome is all too common in this country. Dr. Frank Ostrowski of Atlanta is doing something about it.

He conducts a group of counseling sessions for men who want to stop their destructive behavior. It is patterned along the lines of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"It cuts across all socio-economic lines," says Dr. Ostrowski of wife-battering. "It is not confined to the blue-collar or ghetto person. There are corporate executives who batter their wives and families."

He believes that too much dependency on mothers is one factor behind the development of batterers. Often there is also a link with heavy drinking.

"I don't feel it's my job to slap them on the hands and say they are bad boys," said Dr. Ostrowski. "They are victims also . . . but they are forcing a very great injustice on someone they love."

There is a tendency toward violence in all of us. Nations try to settle disputes through war and individuals do the same through acts of violence. Pray for the strength to overcome evil with good—and seek professional help when prayer alone won't suffice.

"Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within your borders." (Is. 60:18)

Inspire us, Lord, to think thoughts of peace, not war, and to act according to the principles of the Gospel.

"Small Talk" Skills

July 17

Do you think of "small talk" as just a waste of time? Actually, it can be a good way of increasing our circle of friends and acquaintances. Dr. Herbert Fensterheim, in *Retirement Living*, says it is an acquired skill that can be learned like chess or bridge. He offers some pointers:

1. Don't be afraid to start a conversation. Try using an ice-breaker: "Have you lived here long?"
 2. Give an opening to the other person to show something of himself or herself.
 3. When another person invites you to show something of yourself, accept the offer.
 4. Don't hesitate to join ongoing conversations.
 5. Be careful of the "third degree." Don't just ask question after question.
 6. Be prepared with "bail out" sentences. If talk bogs down, use a bridge like: "I don't know why, but that reminds me of . . ."
 7. Acquire the technique of ending a conversation appropriately and moving on to another group.
- Maybe small talk needn't be so small after all.

**"Speak concisely, say much in few words."
(Sir. 32:8)**

Jesus, teach us to extend ourselves to others.

Bus Driving: Equal Opportunity

July 18

A woman driving a bus is a common sight in St. Louis. Fifteen percent of the municipal bus drivers—more than 200—are female.

Until recently, there were few women bus drivers.

Marie Jamison, 27, used to make \$1.35 an hour plus tips as a waitress. She's glad to be a bus driver, with much better hourly pay.

"The work is easy and the money is good," said Ms. Jamison. "Sure, you have to keep a sense of humor and work some weird hours, but . . . you've got to take the good with the bad."

A few male drivers resented the presence of females on the job. But most were cooperative.

The job requires, among other things, memorizing sixty different bus routes, the ability to handle an overloaded vehicle and the ability to keep hot-headed customers cool.

Marie Jamison regrets that she didn't start sooner.

Opportunities open to women today simply weren't available yesterday. It was society's loss as well as theirs. Do you believe in equal opportunity or is it just a slogan?

"I will rejoice in doing them good." (Jer. 32:41)

Guide us, Holy Spirit, in helping others to see what they can do.

The Time of Your Life

July 19

How to you spend your free time each week?

"The less affluent watch more television and rest more," according to a report issued by Cleveland State University. "The more affluent are involved more in adult education courses, formal organizations, reading and going to places of entertainment."

Surprisingly, only one-quarter (23 percent) of the women questioned wanted their husbands to help more with the household chores. This applied even if the wives worked.

"Television," the study states, has caused the greatest change to Americans' daily life in the past 100 years."

Each of us is free to decide how we wish to use our own leisure time. But we should set aside some of our unoccupied moments to listen to people and help them—beginning with our own family members.

We might also expand our horizons through regular learning programs once our formal education has ended.

"Pursue wisdom like a hunter, and lie in wait on her path." (Sir. 14:22)

*Fill us with a love for wisdom, Holy Spirit.
There is so much of Your world that we
do not know about.*

Goats Prevent Forest Fires

July 20

Goats are proving to be a cheap and effective means of preventing the spread of forest fires.

The United States Forest Service conducted a two-year experiment using 800 Spanish goats which chew up brush, thereby keeping firebreaks clear in the Cleveland National Forest, 50 miles east of San Diego, Cal.

The trial worked so well that another 1,700 goats are on order.

The animals belong to a private ranching firm which raised the goats on federal land without charge. Herders are paid by the company, so the government has had to invest only \$30,000 in the experiment.

Common sense and economy go hand-in-hand. They are too seldom found in our world which sometimes equates expense with quality.

Whether in public life or in the home, look for ways to do a better job—and do it cheaper. Any success will make it worth the effort.

**“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
(Col. 3:17)**

Make us more attentive to how we do our jobs, Lord, so that we can become more efficient.

The Fan Makes a Comeback

July 21

One sign that Americans are becoming more energy-conscious is the upsurge in the sale of electric fans.

While the 1960s saw an increase in air-conditioners in homes, fans have made a big comeback since the energy crisis of 1973.

"Our business is 68 times what it was just a few years ago," says Joe Harriman, an official for Hunter Fan, a Memphis firm that has made fans since 1903. It employs 1,100 people.

Approximately 30 percent of Hunter's sales have been to people who already have air-conditioning. Why? Because an attic fan can cut cooling costs in the home by 50 percent.

One woman in New Jersey sold the seven air-conditioners in her home and replaced them with three fans.

Even ceiling fans, which were once sold mostly to Africa and India, have been enjoying a brisk sale in this country.

Whether the energy shortage will make us truly less wasteful in our consumption remains to be seen. Earth's resources are ample, but limited. Each of us has a responsibility to use God's bounty with thoughtfulness and care. Using less today will mean that our children—and theirs—will be provided for.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." (Ps. 24:1)

Help us develop an awareness of what goes on around us, Jesus.

It Takes a Big Man

July 22

Henry Mullens has a sense of humor. The seven-foot, two-inch man is not above telling a few tales as tall as he is.

When asked how he met his wife of 41 years, Mullens, now 62, will reply: "She was shopping in downtown Chicago one day and saw a sign in the window that said, 'Giant Sale.' So she went in and got one."

Even during the normally awkward teenage years, Mullens doesn't recall any special problems. "I was too big for the other kids to give me a bad time."

His advantage on a basketball court leaves little to the imagination. With Henry Mullens at center, his team won one game, 38-0.

Mullens says he likes being tall. "I get into a new town," he explained, "and in five minutes someone's buying me a drink and wanting to take me to dinner. If I was normal-sized, no one would even notice."

Most of us would feel it's no fun to tower over other people. But Henry Mullens turned his size into an advantage. A positive outlook and the ability, with humor, to keep things in perspective can work wonders for us too.

"Rejoice always." (1 Thess. 5:16)

Make us ready, Jesus, to take seriously what we do but not to take ourselves too seriously.

Helps Deaf to Communicate

July 23

Deaf children who are emotionally disturbed have a champion in Jacqueline Griffin, a child psychologist at Napa State Hospital in California. She didn't like the way these children were being treated. Either they were sent to juvenile hall or to an adult psychiatric unit. It was a no-win situation for them.

The first thing she did was to teach the children sign language. That opened up a whole world of communication. They were able to express their feelings and frustrations to someone who could help them.

Her work, which has attracted national attention, stimulated others at the hospital's Children's Center to learn sign language too.

"Deafness," she says, "adds a whole dimension of difficulty to the problems all of us have growing up."

"Our aim is to get more hearing people involved to benefit both groups," she reveals.

One person such as Jacqueline Griffin can make a real difference—in a hospital, in an office, in a classroom, in the home. With God's help, you and I can make a difference too.

"Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him." (Rom. 15:2)

Help us to concentrate on the good we can do, Holy Spirit, rather than be put off by things beyond our control.

Romantic Whim Brings Summons

July 24

A romantic whim involving a marriage proposal, a bottle of champagne, a Good Samaritan and a policeman ended happily in Los Angeles with an understanding judge.

Dick Grotz, an aerospace engineer, was dining with his wife, Arline, when he observed a man at another table placing an engagement ring on his companion's finger. The happy couple ordered champagne. None was available.

On impulse, Grotz hurried out to a nearby store to remedy the situation. On his way back, a policeman stopped him for crossing against a light. The couple got their champagne—and Grotz got a summons.

In court, several days later, Grotz was fined \$5. But the sympathetic judge suspended the sentence.

We live only once. Each opportunity to do good is a heaven-sent chance to lighten someone's burden. If we "blow it" occasionally, let's resolve then and there to be ready for the next time.

"Always seek to do good to one another and to all." (1 Thess. 5:15)

*Make us more aware of human needs, Lord,
and help us to meet them.*

Polio Leads to Academic Career

July 25

For Fernando Torres-Gil, an attack of polio at the age of four months turned out to be his key to an academic career.

The second of ten children of a widowed mother, Fernando underwent 13 operations before he reached age 15. The family subsisted on welfare and on his mother's earnings as a seasonal farmworker.

Fernando, who still walks with a limp, could not compete in sports. So he took college preparatory courses in high school, an unusual step for Chicano students 15 years ago.

He graduated from college in 1970 and studied for a doctorate at Brandeis University, specializing in the problems of the elderly.

"Our family had a great belief in education," said Dr. Fernando Torres-Gil, now at the University of Southern California. "That and our love for one another kept us going through all the rough years."

A setback can be an opportunity. If God lets a door shut, He usually leaves another open. Our job is to find it.

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." (Mt. 7:7)

Don't let us forget Your "open door" policy, Lord, when all progress appears blocked.

Failure Isn't Fatal

July 26

Some people don't succeed at anything because they program themselves for failure.

"Positivity doesn't always come naturally in behavior," says Dr. Joseph Antonelli of Loyola University in Chicago. "But it is a habit that can be learned."

He advises:

- Forget what others might think and say of you.
- Don't downgrade yourself.
- Be confident that you will always land on your feet.
- If you do fail, don't give up.
- Don't complicate your problems.

His final bit of advice: "You have to decide how badly you want something. If you want it badly enough, you'll find a way to achieve it."

Success and failure are not a numbers game. No matter how many times we miss achieving our goals, we're not "out" unless we give up. God's supportive care will buoy our hopes and inspire our achievements—if we ask Him.

**"For the Lord of hosts cares for His flock."
(Zech. 10:3)**

*Increase our trust in You, Jesus, as we
struggle with the inevitable setbacks of life.*

A Very Special Service

July 27

For a week, Joseph and Pauline Klein of Westwood, New Jersey, added a seventh member to their family: a 15-year-old girl from the community.

The girl was doing poorly in school, and it was reported she was being beaten by her parents. The Kleins provided meals and shelter for her, and a chance to escape from the hostile atmosphere of her own home.

She lived by the rules of the Klein household, and attended counseling sessions at a mental health center with her parents. At the end of the week, she returned home, willing to work at getting along with her family.

The Kleins are one of ten host families for CIVICS (Crisis Intervention Via Intermediate Counseling and Service), a county program designed to reduce the number of young people entering the court system because of family difficulties.

Do you know anyone who needs this kind of help? If so, could you provide it, or establish a CIVICS group in your own area?

**"The measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you."
(Mark 4:24)**

Lord, help us to be like the Good Shepherd who goes out in the wilderness in search of the lost sheep.

Kite-Flying on the Rise

July 28

Kite-flying is at least as old as the ancient Greeks. An Athenian named Archytas, a friend of Plato, built and flew a kite shaped like a bird.

Ben Franklin's interest in kites as a young man led to his discovery of electricity. Alexander Graham Bell, better known for inventing a device called the telephone, was also a kite-fancier.

Kites were used by the French Army in the 1870 Franco-Prussian War to signal troop movements. And Yankee artillery observers in the Civil War went aloft on kites until discouraged by sharp-shooting Confederates.

Today, kite-flying is returning to popularity in this country.

Enthusiast Jerry McDaniel of St. Louis calls the sport therapeutic. "It is a good way to release tension," he says. "Some say that the line of a high-flying kite is an extension of the soul . . . soaring in the sky."

We can lift up our eyes to the heavens even without a kite. Looking up can be a prayer, a source of inner strength. Looking beyond our immediate situation puts things in perspective.

"To You I lift up my eyes, O You who are enthroned in the heavens!" (Ps. 123:1)

Inspire us to pause, Jesus, to think lovingly on what the Father has done for us.

A Creative Organist

July 29

Organists at major sports arenas throughout the country attempt to match their selections to the mood or the development of the moment. None are quite as successful as Vince Laschied, the organist at Three Rivers Stadium, home of the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball team.

During one series, Laschied let loose with the "God-father" theme when the opposing manager tried to intimidate the umpire. And when the manager had to go to his relief corps for pitching help, Laschied provided a rendition of "Send In The Clowns." He played "Plop Plop, Fizz Fizz, Oh What A Relief It Is" when the home side had to dip into the bullpen.

That was followed by "The Hallelujah Chorus" when the Pittsburgh relievers were successful. Unfortunately, the Pirates weren't able to catch up in the game and so Laschied closed on an optimistic note with "The Sun Will Be Out Tomorrow."

It was, according to reporters, a virtuoso performance by a man who toils in anonymity most of the time. Like the Pittsburgh organist, we all have within us a creative flair. The trick is to discover it and then let it out so that all may "rejoice for ever in that which I create" (Is. 65:18).

**"I have filled him with the Spirit of God,
with ability and intelligence." (Ex. 31:3)**

*Holy Spirit, inspire us to give full reign to
our creative abilities, directing them to the
welfare of others.*

New Lens Helps the Color Blind

July 30

It was almost by accident that an optometrist looking for a way to help divers see without distortion under water also discovered a lens to assist the color-blind.

Dr. Harry Zeltzer of Waltham, Mass., worked for 13 years to develop filters to correct divers' vision. He found that certain kinds of filters help red-green color blindness, which affects 8.5 million Americans.

The red X-chrom lens, named for the x-chromosome which transmits color blindness, is fitted like a contact lens to the least dominant eye. It does not cure color blindness, but enables viewers to distinguish various degrees of greyness when seeing colors.

It takes an active, agile mind to realize that a solution to one problem may open the path to solving some others.

When you discover something, do you relate it to other information you have? And do you put what you have learned to work in the service of others?

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have." (Heb. 13:16)

Increase our mental agility, Holy Spirit, so we become resourceful in doing good.

Nuisance Calls Raise Hackles

July 31

A new nuisance is getting a strongly negative public reaction. It is the tape-recorded telephone sales pitch.

Every day, seven million people receive such calls. A single machine, programmed to call every number in a directory, can make 1,000 calls a day.

The Federal Communications Commission is getting calls and comments too—nearly all of them asking for restrictions or outright bans on such calls.

"I guess people find it insulting and demeaning to be called by a machine," said one official.

More serious is the fact that people receiving such computerized calls cannot use their phones until the tape runs out. In emergencies, this could be disastrous.

State legislatures and the U.S. Congress are considering bills restricting such automatic sales calls.

Our privacy is generally taken for granted until it is invaded. While protecting our own right to be left alone, let's also make sure we're respecting the rights of others. That's doing to others as if we were the others.

**"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
(Phil. 2:4)**

Spur our efforts, Holy Spirit, to treat people in the manner in which we wish to be treated.

She Jogged Out of a Rut

August 1

Are you in a rut? Caroline Harrington of San Francisco thought she was. Then a friend told her to set small goals for herself to achieve. She has—and how!

Ms. Harrington, 34, took up jogging and finished last (that's right, last!) in the Golden Gate marathon.

"I fell down and bled," she recalls. "It rained on me, but wow, what a thrill!"

Now she is aiming to jog through every one of California's 58 counties. She had romped through 36 when an interviewer caught up with her.

"You know, I've seen some beautiful things," she said. "I'm learning so much. You see such contrasts . . . I have really gotten a lot out of it."

While jogging Ms. Harrington memorizes short plays, songs, famous speeches and poetry. "There's so much to do and so much to know," she said with a big smile.

Setting goals—and achieving them—can bring a tremendous feeling of satisfaction. What are your goals? Are service of God and neighbor among them?

**"Straining forward to what lies ahead, I
press on toward the goal for the prize."
(Phil. 3:14)**

*Keep us from getting bogged down, Holy
Spirit. Lift up our eyes and our spirits to
the mountains.*

Teenage Inventor Lights Up Darkness

August 2

A half-dozen years ago, at the age of 12, Becky Schroeder attracted nationwide attention by gaining a patent for an invention that enabled users to write in straight lines with no light overhead.

Recently the inventive teenager was awarded her third patent.

A development on her first effort, it is a luminescent undersheet that enables a person to read ordinary printing in the dark. It can be used, for example, to illuminate the menu in dimly lighted restaurants.

Becky's father is a patent lawyer.

Besides her natural gifts, Becky Schroeder had the advantage of parental encouragement and guidance.

Imagine what great potential lies in millions of young people—if only their parents take the steps to bring it out!

Feeding and clothing children are only part of the responsibilities of parents. Nourishing the God-given abilities of their children is another.

“I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.” (Ps. 32:8)

Father, help parents to nourish their children's minds and spirits as well as their bodies.

Police and the People

August 3

A police chief in Santa Ana, Cal., transformed a backward, poorly-motivated force into a model for other departments around the country.

First of all, Chief Ray Davis told city council members he needed money. With a vow to reduce crime 20 percent in 20 months, he got \$2.5 million through new taxes. He then added 98 members to the 200-member police force.

Chief Davis recruited Chicano police from around the state and expanded the role of women members. He interviewed his officers and followed many of their recommendations.

Most of all, through COPS (Community Oriented Policing), Chief Davis involved the people themselves in cooperating with a police force that had learned to be more sensitive to their needs.

The result: a 19 percent reduction of crime in 20 months.

Whether it's law enforcement or parenting, we need to take people's thoughts and feelings into account. By showing that we care, we can be agents of God's love.

"He who loves his brother abides in the light." (1 John 2:10)

Keep reminding us, Father, that the way we want to be treated is about the same as others want us to treat them.

Workers Vote on Raises

August 4

If you want to get a raise in Manford McNeil's pipefitting company in Detroit, you've got to do more than convince the boss. You have to win the approval of your fellow workers.

McNeil started his novel management approach five years ago. Until then, his firm had never turned a profit. Every year since then has been profitable.

"Ballot boxes weren't the whole reason," says the employer, "but they were part of it."

"Better than 90 per cent of the raises are voted in," he added. "Management reserves the right to veto any raise, but in those five years, we've never had to exercise that right."

His firm has 95 employees in two plants.

There's something about the "bottom-up" approach that works better than "top-down." It may be that people have an innate sense of fairness that resists the idea of others getting ahead unless they deserve it.

God has planted a sense of right and wrong in each of us. It is called conscience and it should guide all our actions.

"Speak the truth to one another." (Zech. 8:16)

Grant us Your Spirit, Lord, so we may think clearly, speak truthfully and act honestly.

Prison Volunteer Makes a Difference

August 5

Nancy Chromokos, 45, goes to jail twice a week. The Virginia woman is a prison volunteer, one of thousands around the country.

Mrs. Chromokos visits a prisoner named Don, a drug addict who is doing time for burglary in a local jail. The group which trained and sponsors her, Offender Aid and Restoration, is the only national program focusing on local jails.

The prisoner was skeptical. "There had to be a catch," he later admitted thinking.

Nancy Chromokos was ready for that. "You just don't force yourself on anyone," she said.

Months later, her persistence paid off. "I finally realized she wants to help me," Don commented. "I have someone to talk out my problems with, instead of fighting them out."

A change in a person's attitude, brought about by another human being who cared. Well-trained and compassionate volunteers can often accomplish more than police, prisons, punishments or programs. Could you be one?

**"I was in prison and you came to Me."
(Mt. 25:36)**

*Show us, Spirit of God, areas of service in
which we can do the most good.*

Substitute Eyes for the Blind

August 6

Morris Frank of Morristown, N.J., is the first American ever to use a seeing-eye dog. That was in 1928. He recently buried his fifth such animal called "Buddy"—like all those before—and began training his sixth.

Frank lost his sight in two separate accidents. More than 50 years ago, he learned about a program in Europe which used dogs to guide blinded soldiers. He went to Switzerland to bring back his first Buddy.

He promoted the project through Seeing Eye of Morristown, which he set up. The organization has trained more than 7,400 dogs for 1,500 people.

"With a dog, you can come and go," Frank says. "You're not tied down . . . It allows other people to approach you without feeling self-conscious."

One man's determined response to a personal tragedy turned out to be a benefit for thousands.

Morris Frank's inner vision was not obscured by his inability to see. Ask God for this ability to change tragedies, large or small, into triumphs.

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:21)

Father, give us the insight we need to achieve worthwhile goals in the face of difficulties.

She Manages Service Station

August 7

Customers who ask for the manager of a service station in Jennings, Mo., get a surprise when they find out that the "man in charge" is a woman.

By now, Vici Valenti, 17, has gotten used to their raised eyebrows. "They think I'm lying," she says. "It takes a while to convince them."

Ms. Valenti dropped out of school two years before and learned the service station business. She does the hiring and firing, makes up employee schedules, figures out the balance sheet and does the regular servicing of cars.

She plans to complete high school and is thinking about opening her own service station after she graduates.

"I used to work in an office," she said, "and hated it. I like working here because I'm outside all the time and I'm my own boss."

Many people have stereotyped ideas about men and women and their work. What is important is competence on the job. Don't shortchange anyone.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28)

Imbue us with a true sense of justice, Jesus, and respect for the equality of the sexes.

The Experts Were Wrong

August 8

Children are usually better off growing up in their own families—even when the home situation is far from ideal.

But laws and social work practices tend to pull children out of their homes, often to the detriment of the child, according to a study issued by the Children's Defense Fund.

A former social worker with experience both in public and private child care agencies admits:

"We always thought we knew better than these parents, who were, after all, poor . . . We undervalued the means that poor people—often people of another race—used to cope with their problems."

The answer? More money for preventive services. "If the federal government provided funds for preventive services," says Marian Wright Edelman, director of the Children's Defense Fund, "and had strong requirements for better supervision by state authorities, things would change significantly."

Children need families. Parents need help to raise them. Government and social policy should be geared to keeping them together, rather than splitting them apart.

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4)

Inspire us to do all we can, Holy Spirit, to strengthen the bonds of family affection.

Getting a Leg Up on the Future

August 9

Wheels are one way to get around. But in extremely rugged terrain—as found on distant planets or on the ocean floor—specially built legs might be better.

This is the view of two mechanical engineers at the University of Florida in Gainesville. They are studying the world of nature for clues on how to build electrically powered legs for vehicles in future explorations.

Sanjay Dhande and Bill Patterson started by studying a beetle. With the aid of a camera-microscope, they observed how it gets around, how its limbs are coordinated at every joint and how much energy the bug expends.

Next “we will move to frogs, and eventually we will reach the more sophisticated quadrupeds,” Dhande told a news reporter.

You don’t have to be a scientist to learn from the flight of a bee, the rustle of a leaf or the stillness of a meadow covered with snow. There is a fullness and a depth in the world that speaks of its Creator—and speaks to us.

“Ever since the creation of the world, His invisible nature has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made.” (Rom. 1:20)

We are Your handiwork, Father. Give us a sense of oneness with all the other works of Your hands.

Greater Love

August 10

Mother Teresa of Calcutta lives the Christopher ideal. She stresses the importance of individual effort to improve the state of the world.

She writes: "The biggest disease today is not leprosy or tuberculosis, but rather the feeling of being unwanted, uncared for and deserted by everyone. The greatest evil is lack of love, the terrible indifference toward one's neighbors.

"We (she and her sisters) feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not in the ocean, I think the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

She gives a few pointers to help us become more caring people:

"Let no one ever come to you without going away better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness—kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greetings."

Mother Teresa practices what she preaches. As you read her words, listen to them with your heart.

**"Happy is he who is kind to the poor."
(Prov. 14:21)**

*Lord, let me remember that my efforts can
help change the world.*

The Old and the New

August 11

When ladies see George Lefcheck at work, they blow him kisses. Passersby always want to shake his hand.

Lefcheck is a chimney sweep in Torrington, Conn. The 43-year-old man dresses in the traditional top hat and swallow-tailed coat of England's picturesque sweeps.

"You know the song," he says, "'Good luck will rub off when I shake hands with you, or blow me a kiss and that's lucky too.' I'm always blowing kisses from rooftops to everyone who stops and waves."

Lefcheck, who decided to become a chimney sweep after being asked to clean a chimney five years ago, adopted the top hat and tails because "My customers expect me to be dressed that way."

"Nearly every new customer takes my picture. I also get invited to weddings by perfect strangers," he notes.

In these fast-moving times, do not lose the human touch. Only you and I can preserve it. Newer is not always better. Hold on to the "good" in the "good old days."

"Let us choose what is right; let us determine among ourselves what is good." (Job 34:4)

Lord, help me to appreciate the human element.

She Was Ready for Her Big Moment

August 12

Maureen Scanlon was ready when her big break came. Sightless herself, she used to support herself by teaching at the Jewish Guild for the Blind in New York City. But her heart was in a singing career.

Miss Scanlon applied to the Market at the Citicorp Center, which provides entertainment to noontime crowds. Then she waited. Her chance came when actress Phyllis Newman bowed out of a scheduled appearance shortly before she was due to perform.

Howard Muchnick, manager of the Market, put in an emergency call for Miss Scanlon, who arrived just in time for the performance. The audience of 500 thought Maureen was just great and she was scheduled for a longer engagement.

Our breaks in life rarely have this "Hollywood" flavor. Most opportunities come as a result of hard work, perseverance and a willingness to "go on" when the moment arrives.

God presents us with many chances to serve our fellow humans. If we miss them, it's often because we were looking the other way, or were too timid to try. Be alert to your opportunities!

"As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men." (Gal. 6:10)

Don't let us get so bogged down in our troubles, Lord, that we can't recognize our big moment when it comes.

From Drifter to Worker

August 13

David Pence, a 32-year-old drifter, found hope through a new project for the chronically unemployed.

Pence used to move across the country from job to job. His idea of work was to earn enough money to buy liquor.

At last, he went through a drying-out period and joined Alcoholics Anonymous. Friends then directed him to the Community Help Corp., a project financed largely by enterprises in fields such as cabinet-making, printing and food distribution.

Participants in the program receive training and learn the discipline of a craft. After a year in the program, David Pence has developed a good work record and a new sense of purpose. He is a new man.

Some people have overcome tremendous obstacles in order to change their lives for the better. Obviously, they were not able to do it alone. The support of others is the indispensable ingredient of success.

Look around you—someone near you could use a little help. You can make a difference.

“Let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need.” (Titus 3:14)

Lord Jesus, help us so that we in turn can help our brothers and sisters.

Mine Used for Storage

August 14

The Carey Company's salt mine under a Kansas prairie contains more than salt for de-icing the nation's roads.

Because of its low humidity and constant temperature 650 feet below the surface, the mine is used for the safe storage of records of some 15,000 businesses.

Major oil producers store secret geological data there. The mine also houses a comprehensive library of MGM films, the medical records of many hospitals, and a variety of other material.

Even stacks of hybrid corn that could germinate after thousands of years are stored in the mine.

Preservation of ideals, as well as useful material, is a way of showing regard for those who come after us. Do we think and act in such a manner that the legacy we leave will honor God and enhance the lives of our children's children?

"Lay up your treasure according to the commandments of the Most High, and it will profit you more than gold." (Sir. 29:11)

Jesus, what You did while on earth still inspires millions. May we seek to live as You did.

People Save Their Own Town

August 15

Working in 116-degree heat, more than 200 volunteers laid 14 miles of pipe overland to supply the town of Olney, Tex., with life-giving water.

The town of 5,000 faced extinction during a severe drought unless it came up with an alternate water supply to fast-drying Lake Cooper. To lay conventional water pipe to Olney from lakes outside the drought zone would have taken one year.

"The town would have died before we could finish," Mayor Alan Myers recalls.

A hurried search turned up a supply of "invasion pipe," stored since World War II in state warehouses. Merchants, lawyers, executives, ranchers all closed shop and worked round the clock laying sections of the pipe from the Wichita Falls reservoir system to Lake Cooper.

While only a temporary solution, the mass effort provided time to devise a permanent one.

People pitch in when the threat of a common danger strikes home. At other times, we have conscience to remind us of the less obvious needs in our communities. Don't ignore it.

"Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor." (1 Cor. 10:24)

Holy Spirit, keep us from being shirkers in facing up to our responsibilities to friends, neighborhood and country.

Reader, Spare That Tree

August 16

Some large communities regularly survey the state of public shade trees. Such a survey in Richmond, Va., revealed that there are 200,000 public shade trees in the city and that without them the city would have to spend \$827,000 a day for equivalent air conditioning. The temperature under a big tree could be 25 degrees cooler than in the direct rays of the sun.

That's something we don't often think about. Nor do we think about how trees can also prevent heat loss. For instance, the placement of tall evergreens on the northwest side of buildings can result in a winter fuel saving of 25 to 40 percent.

Leaf trees have the double advantage of providing cooling shade in summer without blocking out the welcome rays of the winter sun. They are best placed on the southern or southeastern corner of a house or building, according to the experts.

Trees also collect dirt and ash from the air, remove carbon dioxide and manufacture oxygen.

Respecting nature's way of recycling the elements can be a means of living better, cheaper and more in harmony with our surroundings. God knew what He was doing.

"Ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature, namely, His eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made." (Rom. 1:20)

Lead us to a deeper appreciation of Your truth, goodness and beauty, Lord, by taking time to contemplate Your creation.

Childhood Depression Increasing

August 17

Depression among small children is on the increase in numbers and intensity, according to Kathryn Williams, a psychiatric social worker at the Peninsula Hospital, Burlingame, Cal.

"What it means," says Ms. Williams, "is that at some early levels there have probably been some outstanding deficits in terms of the child's needs being met."

"The emotional needs of little people do not change," she says. "The more things change in the world around us, the more their needs remain the same."

Ms. Williams attributes the problem in part to the effect on children of the high divorce rate and the limited contact of one or both parents with children due to work requirements. Families, too, are more isolated.

"When children feel unloved," she believes, "that is the beginning of a child not feeling good about himself."

Adults need to recognize that children are dependent on stable, deep emotional support. Nothing is more important to the survival of our nation than the welfare of our children.

"Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me." (Luke 9:48)

Let us take the time, Lord, to look into the eyes of a child and see the longing for love that is there.

God Doesn't Forget

August 18

A priest and a dentist received an award not long ago for 10 years' service to the people of the White-lock St. area of Baltimore, a neighborhood of oppressive poverty. The award was sponsored by an organization called "No Greater Love," a group of professional athletes dedicated to "forgotten Americans."

In accepting the award Father Frank Composto said: "Society would like to forget the people of White-lock St., but God doesn't play that kind of game."

A neighborhood center run by Father Composto and Dr. John K. Taylor, a dentist, offers dental services, Bible study, tutoring and music programs for neighborhood children.

Possibly a center near you provides similar services to the poor, whether young or old. Support it, with your time and your money. If there is no such center, perhaps you and your friends can find a way to start one.

The fact that Jesus said the poor are always with us was a statement of reality, not an ideal. He spent most of His time with the poor. He loved them. His message was directed to the whole of their lives, not just their souls.

"For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have Me." (Matt. 26:11)

Lord, never let us forget the needs of those who are without the basics of life.

His Persistence Paid Off

August 19

It took Angelo Asciolla of Laconia, N.H., five years to turn his "lemon" into lemonade.

His new car turned out to be a lemon. There was rust underneath, ice on the transmission and, after two weeks, it wouldn't go forward or backward.

After he failed to get satisfaction from the manufacturer, he went to court. Five years and many appeals later, he was awarded \$6,000 in damages—and a new automobile. This one works fine.

Asciolla thinks the company stretched out the case to discourage other such suits. "But I wasn't going to give up," he said. "The reason we have such poor service is that most consumers won't do anything."

When we pay good money for a product, we have a right to expect good quality. And we have a responsibility to give it to others—our families, business associates or the public.

Stand up for your rights. But recognize that God has given the same rights to others.

"Delight will be found in the speech of the intelligent. The utterance of a sensible man will be sought in the assembly." (Sir. 21: 16-17)

Grant us a sense of balance, Jesus, in our dealings with people. It's so easy to be one-sided.

A Voice for the Family

August 20

What's the best system for raising children, meeting economic needs and giving people a sense of responsibility? As always it is the family.

Theodora Ooms, deputy director of Family Impact Seminar in Washington, D.C., puts it this way: "We have to change practices to meet family needs, rather than take over family functions."

Working mothers (one-third of whom have pre-school children), the rising divorce rate and single-parent households are all putting strains on contemporary family life and led to establishment of the seminar.

Mrs. Ooms feels strongly about the growing stress on self-fulfillment. "I think it's gone too far," she says, adding: "People need some rootedness, some sense of responsibility."

If our families have done their jobs well, we carry through life the knowledge that we were loved and were "let go" when we could make it on our own.

**"Train up a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not depart from
it." (Prov. 22:6)**

*Help us to develop our own potential, Lord,
while being good family members.*

He Asked for Help

August 21

Andy Borloz proved his skills and creativity when he graduated cum laude from the University of Bridgeport with a degree in industrial design. Borloz is deaf.

He attended public high schools before going to college. "It would have been too easy," he said, "for me to attend a special school. I proved in high school I could do the work, so I wasn't worried."

"Sometimes teachers would turn to the blackboard when speaking. When I couldn't see their lips," he said, "I'd just look over on somebody's notes." He added with a smile: "Or if it really got bad, I'd ask the lecturer to take his hands away from his mouth."

To have a goal in life and to put in the effort to reach it are factors that can overcome many obstacles.

But Andy Borloz also was able to ask for help, from parents, teachers and friends in the deaf community. For some of us, that's the hardest thing to do. If you need help, ask. You can open new doors.

**"You do not have, because you do not ask."
(James 4:2)**

Give us a sense of purpose, Lord, and the ability to turn to you and to others with our needs.

Doctor Uses Reverse Psychology

August 22

To make things better, says psychiatrist Alan Fay of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, you sometimes start by making them worse.

Dr. Fay helps patients treat problems, phobias and obsessions by intensifying them. This enables patients to see the humor in their situation and put it in perspective.

Thumb-suckers are encouraged to break their habit by being told to suck their thumbs all the time. Incessant smokers have overcome the cigarette habit when told to smoke more.

Dr. Fay calls his system paradoxical therapy. He has even used it to help couples who fight frequently. The result, said Dr. Fay, has been "a dramatic improvement in the relationship; fighting down and almost out."

Dr. Fay gets motorists to use seat belts by reminding them that traffic injuries are important to the medical profession as a source of income for doctors and hospitals. It seems to work.

As used by Dr. Fay, reverse psychology leaves people free to do better, instead of coercing them. That's how God deals with us. He leaves us free, while enabling us to improve. We could do no better with others.

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Gal. 5:1)

Father, remind me to stop every once in awhile to thank You for the gift of freedom and to respect it in other people.

Police Conserving on Fuel

August 23

The high price of gasoline is making police departments more fuel-conscious.

In DeSoto, Ill., for example, police chief Brent Nausley makes his rounds on a 10-speed bicycle. It was costing the town \$700 a month for gas, and the bike was a once-only expenditure of \$158.

"Twice this year, we've run out of gas and had to park the car," said the police chief of Grand Tower, Ill.

In Edwardsville, Ill., the police use mopeds, which can cruise for many miles on a gallon of gas.

There may be other advantages besides gas-saving. For one thing, says Chief Nausley, the patrolling officer can check out nuisance complaints without scaring away the offenders.

It's amazing what steps can be taken to conserve fuel once the necessity is upon us. Do you think twice about the alternatives—perhaps combining errands in one trip—before jumping into your automobile?

Cheap energy is a thing of the past. Conservation is the way of the future. God's bountiful resources are not limitless and there is a need to think of the requirements of future generations.

"Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy." (1 Cor. 4:2)

Lord, make us good stewards of the creation that You have placed in our trust.

Music Motivated Blind Girl

August 24

At the age of three, Mindy Fliegelman was taken to the synagogue for a special holiday. She recalls not wanting to go. But “when the cantor sang, it was so beautiful I got chills,” she remembers.

The sacred music exerted such a strong pull on her that now, at 27, she’s a cantor herself—one of the few women cantors in the country—and the only one who is blind.

To become a cantor, she took a five-year course at New York’s Hebrew Union School of Education and Sacred Music. Each year she won the outstanding student award.

As a cantor at Nassau Community Temple, West Hempstead, Long Island, she is licensed to conduct services and such special ceremonies as weddings, bar mitzvahs, etc. Explaining why she became a cantor, she says, “I want to leave the lives I touch a little better than when I found them.”

Each of us has opportunities to leave lives better for having been touched by ours. Ask God’s help—and get going!

**“Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise
in the assembly of the faithful!” (Ps. 149:1)**

*Father, let me look on each human being
I meet as someone from whom I can learn
and to whom I can give.*

Artist Has Knack of "Getting By"

August 25

William Prankard works his own hours, attends nearly 25 art shows a year and has a room-size mural at a restaurant in Atlanta. However, he doesn't have much money.

"Last year I grossed maybe \$1,800," said the print-maker who fills in as a carpenter's assistant to earn money for art supplies.

Asked how he can live on that little, Prankard confides that he has no car and "sleeps on friendly floors." He always pays his creditors. And he manages to laugh a lot.

His mural in Aunt Charley's pub saw the artist through a recent winter. He bartered it for meals.

William Prankard's lifestyle isn't for everyone. But it does remind us that an individual can lead a reasonable existence without spending much money, that the pursuit of visual beauty is worth the effort and that a sense of humor can be a necessary asset.

Sometimes we can get caught up in a frenzied pursuit of things we don't really need. Then it's time to reflect on William Prankard's offbeat credo: "The art of being an artist is the pleasure from the process rather than the product. I concentrate on the process because nobody buys the product."

"Each is skillful in his own work." (Sir. 38:31)

Holy Spirit, help us consider the quality of the work we do and not think only of the paycheck at the end of the week.

Building New Lives

August 26

Troubled teenagers suspended from schools in Georgia's Chatham County are building new lives for themselves as they build animal habitats.

Oatland Island Educational Center is a unique new nature project for the county's schools. On government-donated surplus land, the program uses teenagers to convert acreage to outdoor labs for students to study nature.

Lacking funds to hire architects and builders, director Tony Cope relied on Youth Conservation Corps volunteers to work with the suspended youngsters. They help the youths to construct habitats for alligators, raccoons and bobcats.

Newly motivated by the project, the boys and girls often return to school the following term. Despite 90-degree heat and muscle strain from hours of digging, youngsters find the work exciting and satisfying.

Troubled or not, teenagers need guidance to build good lives. Through active involvement in a project they can learn and accomplish a great deal. But remember, there is something they need from us at all times—a listening ear!

**“How can I, unless someone guides me?”
(Acts 8:31)**

*Holy Spirit, grant us an openness of heart
when we listen to teenagers.*

"I Didn't Know What to Say"

August 27

A woman whose husband has an incurable illness wrote to Ann Landers that people tell her, "I've been wanting to come and see him but I didn't know what to say." In her letter she suggested:

"By all means come to see him now. Today . . . And here are some things you can say:

"I've been praying for you.

"I've been thinking about you and if there is anything I can do, call me anytime.

"I'm going to bring you lunch or supper tomorrow.

"I'm going to drive your car pool this month.

"I'll take your children to a movie this afternoon.

"I'm bringing you a book I think will help.

"I'll take you to the doctor this week.

"I'll come keep you company so your wife can go get her hair done."

Hesitation in such situations is understandable. We're usually focusing on our own discomfort instead of on the other person's need. Just a shift of attitude can make all the difference.

"Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him." (Rom. 15:2)

Help me, Lord, to be open to the need of others so I can do Your work.

California's Most Popular Prisoner

August 28

Michael "Red" Brown of California is literally a "wanted" man—even though he is in prison, and has been in prison for 27 years out of the last 32.

When he was last arrested, two state prisons—Folsom and San Quentin—tried to "recruit" him. Instead, he chose to serve his time in the correctional facility at Chino, Cal.

Why is he so popular with prison officials where he has served? He's never been a disciplinary problem. He is intelligent, takes shorthand and stays out of trouble. While in Folsom, he wrote a history of the prison that was professional in every respect and was described as "a truly historic document" by Warden P.J. Morris.

But Red Brown's problem is that he can't stay out of trouble on the outside. Psychologists are baffled and describe him as "institutionalized"—one so accustomed to an institutional setting that he is unable to cope with non-institutional existence.

Is Red Brown's prison "success" the failure of our prison system? Of society? Or is the failure completely his own? These are disturbing questions. Reflection alone won't provide the answers. But reflection will demonstrate the need for answers.

"(The Lord) will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart." (1 Cor. 4:5)

Lift up our eyes, Jesus, and lead us to gauge our accomplishments by what You expect of us rather than the expectations of others.

Baby Born Against All Odds

August 29

Shirley and Charles Patterson waited 13 years until they could have a baby—and then complications nearly prevented the child's birth. Little David, six pounds, four ounces, developed outside the mother's womb, which happens once in about 10,000 pregnancies. The chances of a successful birth were too rare to estimate.

"We waited a long time for this child," said the father, a resident of Burlington, N.C. "When doctors were unable to hear a fetal heartbeat, we both prayed about it. I believe in God and believe He wanted us to have the baby."

Dr. Linn Hatley, chief resident in obstetrics at North Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill, said nobody knows what causes a fertilized egg to slip out of the fallopian tube away from the uterus. The fetus, in this case, dropped into the abdomen and the placenta attached itself to a blood supply near the pelvis.

Few things make people more conscious of God's creative power than the miracle of birth. Have you ever pondered the wonder of your own existence? Whatever the odds against survival, choose life in all that you do.

"Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures for ever. Do not forsake the work of Your hands." (Ps. 138:8)

*In a world torn by strife and destruction,
Jesus, empower us to choose life over death.*

Wild Animals Making a Comeback

August 30

Wild animals are making a comeback in this country, with unpleasant consequences for homeowners.

According to the Urban Wildlife Research Center Inc., beavers, alligators, coyotes, wolves, raccoons, possums and deer are all moving closer to densely populated areas.

Some reasons biologists give for this change are: restrictions on hunting, bans against such pesticides as DDT and the shrinking of our wilderness areas. The latter development leaves animals no choice but to adapt to living near humans.

One dangerous aspect of this trend is that more and more cases of rabies are being caused by wildlife, mostly skunks. In Florida, three persons have been killed in recent years by wandering alligators.

"Wild animals aren't going away," said Thomas Franklin of the Wildlife Center. "It's not a question of whether we can live with them. The question is how best we can live with them."

Restoring the upset balance of nature is a task that will confront us for decades to come. One way to help is to support steps that protect the human population while guaranteeing enough living space for God's wilderness creatures.

"O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures." (Ps. 104:24)

Father, keep us mindful of the need to protect the gifts of Your creation.

"Middletown"—Then and Now

August 31

Times have changed in Muncie, Ind., but not as much as you might think.

Fifty years ago, Robert and Helen Lynd, sociologists, studied Muncie from top to bottom. They called their pioneering effort "Middletown." The book became a classic.

Recently Theodore Caplow and a team of researchers duplicated the Lynds' study. They found the divorce rate unchanged, though divorces are less secretive than before.

The new study found far greater religious tolerance. "The individual has more slack in every sense than his 1924 counterpart," says Caplow.

In 1924, only a few women worked—and then only for strictly economic reasons. Today, 42 percent of married women work. Parents today were found to spend more time with their children.

Ball State University in Muncie has grown from a small teachers' college to an institution with 17,000 students. It is the town's largest employer and hub of its cultural life.

And in Muncie, just as elsewhere, individual freedom is far greater than before. The question is: do we use that freedom any better than our ancestors did?

"Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God." (1 Pet. 2:16)

Amid the changes in the world and in ourselves, Lord, give us the grace to keep our eyes fixed firmly on You.

Conquered Polio to Become a Nurse

September 1

Leilani Logan of Chicago overcame paralysis from the neck down to achieve her career ambition; and she gave much of the credit to her nurses. At 27, Mrs. Logan became a nurse herself.

"They were always optimistic about the future, always helping me not to give up hope," said the 1957 Easter Seal poster child after graduation ceremonies at St. Anne's School of Nursing in Chicago. A slight limp is the only trace of her childhood polio.

Mrs. Logan's parents played a part too. "My dad," she said, "started teaching me swimming as soon as I got out of the hospital. He got a bunch of handicapped children together, took us to the pool and taught us how to swim."

Through the strength she built up through swimming, she was able to take a few steps without crutches. Then several operations permitted her to get rid of the braces and crutches.

Our successes usually depend on personal effort plus help from other sources. Asking for help and accepting it gracefully is a sign of maturity.

**"The same Lord is Lord of all and bestows
His riches upon all who call upon Him."
(Rom. 10:12)**

*Lord, don't let us be too proud to admit
we need more than our own powers to see
us through.*

Farmers Teach Lesson to Experts

September 2

Dr. John Hill of Brigham Young University, a food-science expert, was at first skeptical when told that African farmers were successfully protecting stored grain and seeds from infestation by mixing the grain with castor oil.

Modern methods of grain preservation are too expensive or not readily available to poor farmers in developing countries. But castor oil?

"We tried the oil theory and, to our amazement, it worked," Dr. Hill said in an interview.

Palm, peanut, sesame, corn and olive oil all seem to be effective in protecting grain for up to a year without affecting the quality or taste.

Grain can be stored or sprouted, be eaten or planted without harm when mixed with a small quantity of oil.

The method is now being adopted by farmers in many poor countries.

New ideas are sometimes new only to us. God's wisdom isn't restricted to what modern men consider as up-to-date. If we are open, even the brightest among us can learn more.

"All wisdom comes from the Lord." (Sir. 1:1)

Jesus, prompt us to be open-minded in approaching problems so we don't overlook the obvious.

Crime Prevention Really Works

September 3

The most exciting and hopeful area in the war against crime the past decade has been in the field of prevention.

In 1971, the U. S. Department of Justice began funding local crime prevention units. Now there are approximately 1,350 such programs throughout the country.

In Portland, Ore., for example, the program offers free security surveys to low-income homeowners. It results in the trimming of high shrubbery around houses, and the installation of better locks for doors and gates for windows.

Other communities have devised similar programs, many of them relying on neighborhood cooperation.

Crimes such as robbery are most frequent where people live in isolation. Preventive methods work best when based on community cooperation. When people work together, everything goes better.

Alone, each of us has many limitations. But united in pursuit of a goal—whether crime prevention, better schools or more efficient government—we can work wonders.

Get to know your neighbors. Everyone has a lot to gain.

“Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.” (Prov. 27:10)

Increase our capacity for friendship, Holy Spirit, so we may help and be helped in time of need.

What Not to Do While Driving

September 4

New Jersey drivers are among the safest in the nation. In 1976, they caused fewer deaths than drivers of any other state.

And they also have some interesting explanations for the accidents they get involved in, according to information supplied by the state's Department of Motor Vehicles. For example:

"I was eating a shrimp sandwich that tasted so good I forgot for a moment I was driving."

"I had a date with a beautiful girl and was so anxious to get there I ran into this guy's back end."

"I was making a left turn when my wife said: 'Oh, look. There go our new neighbors.' I looked."

"A small animal crossed my path, put on the brakes, skidded on the ice, and knocked down a fence."

Excuses, even the best, always limp a little. Being careful and prayerful beforehand can forestall plenty of trouble.

**"He made for them tongue and eyes; He gave them ears and a mind for thinking."
(Sir. 17:6)**

Keep us mindful of the matter at hand, Holy Spirit, when we're at the wheel and in every other circumstance.

Communicating Through Photos

September 5

Because he is unable to hear, Richard Norton of Rochester, N. Y., can't speak very well. But the 19-year-old has another way of communicating—through photography.

Already he has won 40 awards, and was a national winner in a 4-H photography contest sponsored by Eastman Kodak Company.

He plans to become a photojournalist. "I need a career in which oral communication will not be of major importance," he explains.

Richard's interest in photography began when he was 11, on a family trip to the West.

"I wanted to be able to tell people about the trip," he says. "My speech was not good, but I could show pictures."

He is now a student at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester.

Doing what we can doesn't mean settling for less. It requires a deep faith in ourselves. And it can be bolstered by a knowledge of the confidence God shows in each of us.

"I have great confidence in you." (2 Cor. 7:4)

*You have great confidence in me, Lord.
Help me find confidence in myself.*

Glimmer of Hope for the Deaf

September 6

The hopes of profoundly deaf persons that they might hear have been given a boost by the cochlear implant, a small device developed by Dr. William F. House, director of research at the Ear Research Institute in Los Angeles.

Dr. House has made about 50 such implants, which use electrical impulses to beam sounds into the usually unimpaired inner ear. Power is supplied by a battery pack which is carried in the pocket and is as small as a cigarette box.

There are about two million totally deaf persons in the U. S.

Dr. House does not claim total recovery of hearing. But he says that with his device deaf persons "get a lot of information about their environment—can hear footsteps, doorbells and telephones."

Because of cost—\$6,000 to \$8,000 for each operation—and the limited number of centers providing such services, only a small fraction of the deaf have yet benefited. But a new era for the deaf is at least on the horizon.

The technology of hope uses the same knowledge and skills as the technology of destruction. But the hundreds of billions spent on armaments in our strife-torn world overwhelm the comparative pennies spent on instruments of healing. Sad but true.

"The plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop." (1 Cor. 9:10)

Grant, Father, that we may use our knowledge and skills for the peace and harmony of our brothers and sisters.

Job-Switching on the Upswing

September 7

If you are an average worker, you may change jobs three to five times by the time you retire.

The 1970 census reported that one-third of the work force had changed jobs in the previous five years. Other estimates state that the average worker under 35 makes a switch every year and a half, and those over 35 change every three years.

The United States Bureau of Labor statistics cites "a tremendous volume of occupational movement among workers."

Factors that account for this trend include boredom with certain types of work, a desire to move to other parts of the country, a belief that "the grass is greener" elsewhere and that happiness on the job is a right.

If your job is dull and you can do something about it, then by all means do it! If you can't switch, perhaps you can find ways of advancement. Alertness and ingenuity can work wonders.

Refusal to give up on what seems to be an unsatisfactory job may, with God's help, enable you to discover new possibilities in your work.

**"And every work that he undertook . . . seeking his God, he did with all his heart."
(2 Ch. 31:21)**

Remind us, Father, to think about our jobs and seek ways to perform them more effectively.

How to Order a Fresh Egg

September 8

The only way you can be sure of getting a fresh egg in a restaurant nowadays, says Beatrice Hunter, is to order it soft-boiled in the shell.

In her book, *The Great Nutrition Robbery*, Miss Hunter takes on artificial flavorings, colorings and additives that she feels are lowering food quality.

"Restaurants," says the Hillsboro, N. Y., author, "can now buy scrambled eggs frozen in 10-pound plastic bags."

Aside from deficiencies in taste, she questions the effect on health of some processed food. "What about the long-term safety?" she asks. "We just don't know.

"The greatest convenience foods," she adds, "are supplied by nature: eggs, fruits, raw vegetables. No scientist has come up with anything better."

It may appear hopeless for one person to take on a giant industry, but efforts like Bea Hunter's have led the government to tighten restrictions on food additives.

One person, with competence, can do much. He or she can spark others to fight abuses of various kinds. It could be you.

"A man of cheerful and good heart will give heed to the food he eats." (Sir. 30:25)

Keep us from becoming disheartened, Jesus, when we feel alone.

Long Wait Is Rewarded

September 9

Salvatore Napoli could have become an American citizen in 1952. But neither he nor his family knew that the literacy requirement had been waived that year to allow citizenship for those over 50 who had lived here 20 years or more.

As he approached his 100th year, Napoli's son asked him if he had one wish. "Cittadinanza," he said. "I want to be an American citizen."

It took his son two more years to find a lawyer who knew about the literacy waiver. Two months before his 102nd birthday, Salvatore Napoli of Glen Cove, N. Y., became a citizen.

He received the news with tears in his eyes and rushed out to tell the people of his neighborhood.

Do we appreciate our citizenship? Do we live up to its obligations—to vote intelligently, to serve on jury duty if called, to participate responsibly in community affairs?

A good citizen may be critical of his or her country. But that means an added effort to do something positive—to light a candle instead of just cursing the darkness.

"You are the light of the world." (Mt. 5:14)

Help us to appreciate what it means to live in a free country, Father.

Countering Child Abuse

September 10

Sharon Stitt of Seattle, Wash., working at a youth agency, saw first-hand the results of child-abuse and neglect. And she decided to do something about it.

After a lot of studying and organizing, Ms. Stitt applied for and received federal funding for her new project. She then enlisted the help of professional counselors. The "Parent Place" was born.

Counseling sessions and classes on "How to Parent" are provided.

One of the services offered is the "Panic Line"—people phone in when they fear they are losing control and may abuse their children. Already almost a hundred people come to the "Parent Place" every month.

Frustrated, angry people need to air their feelings, to talk to someone who cares. Are you a listener? Are you a friend to those who seek your help? The Lord asks us to be good to one another.

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2)

Jesus, help us to lighten each other's crosses for Your sake.

Homework Hotline Proves Popular

September 11

More than 250 calls a night came in to Philadelphia's experimental "Dial a Teacher" program when it was first organized. It was designed to help students with their homework problems.

Six to eight teachers, all experts in their field, handle the phones from 5 to 8 p.m. each day. Most requests involve math, science and social studies.

"My main emphasis," says Ronald Zehnle, a high school math teacher, "is to make the students more dependent on themselves, to find something themselves, not to do the homework but to give direction."

"The concept," according to School Superintendent Michael Marcuse, "is not to give students answers but to help them to arrive at their own answers, to get a better grasp on the process of understanding the problem."

The aim of education is to enable people to become self-motivated, self-directed and hungry for learning. It is to draw out a student's interest, not to pound facts into his head.

You can be an educator. You can whet a child's appetite for learning. You can encourage a love for nature, for culture, for practical knowledge, for the wisdom of God.

**"I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness."
(Prov. 4:11)**

Teach us to be good listeners, Lord, so that we can learn how to be better teachers by word and example.

The Nuclear Energy Debate

September 12

In the wake of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident in Pennsylvania in March 1979 a grass-roots re-assessment of our energy needs and priorities has taken place and is still continuing.

Few of us have expertise to offer in the nuclear field, but that's all the more reason to raise some questions.

Obviously we need some new sources of power to meet our future energy requirements, but is nuclear power really the answer? Can the risks involved be justified?

A serious accident is not merely a hazard to those in the plant, it involves whole cities, and all future generations. There has never been so great a potential threat before in world history. What kind of legacy are we leaving our children and grandchildren?

We need to inform ourselves—and others—of the needs and the risks. We need to encourage the development of alternatives. We need to participate fully in the decision-making process. And we need to join with like-minded people to promote the general welfare.

It's part and parcel of good citizenship.

“Fill the earth and subdue it.” (Gen. 1:28)

Holy Spirit, give me the wisdom to cut through the complexities of the energy problem so I can act with the welfare of all in mind.

Retirement Requires Planning

September 13

Retirement used to be an ominous word to many employees, but business is beginning to change this by sponsoring programs to prepare people for the years beyond their working lives.

"Most people are badly prepared for retirement," says Dr. Alan Entine, an affiliate of the N. Y. State University at Stonybrook.

Dr. Virginia Boyack, an expert from the University of Southern California, comments: "People are realizing, 'Hey, I'm going to live a long time—what am I going to do with all those years?' "

Larger companies, in an effort to assure turnover by removing fears of retirement, have begun to offer informational and counseling sessions that cover financial planning, second career options, health, leisure time and legal issues.

"I try to make people understand retirement as part of a long life continuum," says Sybil Gruner, a consultant at American Express. "I think you should approach it as another career. You've got to work at it like anything else."

Work is important. But it shouldn't be your entire life. Plan now for more time to spend with family, friends and in constructive activities that can activate your God-given talents.

"The work of a man's hand comes back to him." (Prov. 12:14)

Let us take steps now, Lord, to make sure that our years are filled with happy and productive moments.

The Bugs Are Gaining

September 14

There are three million species of insects in the world and their numbers are such that they actually outweigh the human race by 12 to 1 although they are small in size.

After decades in which it appeared that man was getting the upper hand, pesticide-resistant bugs are gaining in the race for the planet's food supplies. They now devour as much as 40 percent of the agricultural yield in some places.

The use of stronger pesticides over the last few decades has apparently backfired, leaving the surviving insects tougher than ever. The World Health Organization attributes the dramatic increase in malaria in the Third World to the growing insecticide resistance of the 40 species of mosquitoes that carry the disease.

In some cases, a more selective use of pesticides in smaller quantities aimed at a particular species has proved effective. Biological methods—the use of the natural enemies of certain insects—may prove to be the way of the future.

The growing insect threat is a reminder that use of chemical means of control is not a long-term solution to the problem. In addition, it is often harmful to those who harvest our crops, the nation's farmworkers. Better ways must be found.

“A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children.” (Prov. 13:22)

Increase our respect for the processes of nature, Lord, for we bring trouble on ourselves by ignoring them.

Poor Taste, Poor Argument

September 15

Every year, it seems, one or two college publications published by students disparage religion in such tasteless fashion that college officials feel compelled to apologize. In 1979 it was the turn of officials at City College of New York and the University of Minnesota to denounce material appearing in the *Observation Post* and the *Minnesota Daily*, respectively.

Always we are informed that the officials are “powerless” to control the publication of the vulgarities and obscenities that are fobbed off as legitimate expressions of opinion.

Why should this be so? College publications are subsidized, either directly or indirectly. They are not in the same category as privately-operated papers—most of which, incidentally, show respect for their reader’s sensitivities.

In some instances student publications receive funds of a public nature. In others, public funds free other monies used for subsidies. In still others, student activity fees provide the subsidy.

We all believe in freedom of the press. But it cannot be separated from responsibility—and accountability. College officials should not be allowed to hide behind an alleged “powerlessness” when the college is a vehicle for the subsidy or is the conduit for public funds.

“A fool throws off restraint.” (Prov. 14:16)

Holy Spirit, enlighten those who ridicule the beliefs of others.

The Key to Good Health

September 16

You find the key to good health in yourself, according to a booklet published by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Associations.

The booklet, called "Help Yourself," advises that "you'll find the key in the way you exercise and eat and relax and drive your car." It claims that modern disease can be prevented by changing elements in our lives that are dangerous to health.

For example, heart disease has decreased 23 percent in the past 15 years because people have become more aware of the need for good diet, exercise and rest.

The booklet, which has chapters by ten authorities on such topics as nutrition, exercise, coping with stress, guarding against cancer and when to call a physician, concentrates only on prevention.

As one of the authors says, "It's the way you live before you get sick" that counts.

Prevention in health care is just beginning to get the attention it deserves. It's the same way in other things. Try to be moderate, consistent and thoughtful in all you do.

"Before you fall ill, take care of your health." (Sir. 18:19)

Guide us, Holy Spirit, to live in such a way that neither we nor others will have regrets later.

Novice Newsman Faces Hurdles

September 17

James Watts, a journalism major at Adams State College in Colorado, has a lot going for him.

He has one limitation. Watts, 20, is blind. But that didn't prevent him from talking his way onto his college newspaper or interning during vacations.

At a local daily paper, the Alamosa Valley Courier, Watts conducts interviews, mostly by phone, and rewrites facts collected by others into news stories.

He admits it would be impossible to cover a ball game. As for meetings, he notes, "It's sometimes hard to keep the voices straight if I'm quoting people."

"What I'm trying to do is show them what I can do," he says. He wants to work at "anything to do with writing."

How much do we have going for us? How much do we want to accomplish something? If we are willing to do the work and pay the price, there is a lot that, with God's help, we can do.

We all have limitations. But what about our potential?

"Do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward." (Heb. 10:35)

Help us to concentrate more, Father, on what we and others can do, less on what we can't.

Television may be a window to the world, but it's not the only one. Educational TV experts around the country are developing a series of programs on different grade levels to help students form their own judgments on what they watch, when to watch and when to turn off the set.

"The aim is to use TV instead of being used by it," says Debbi Bilowit of New York's WNET, which is putting together the middle-school portion of the program.

The project includes a "family component," where parents and children can view programs together and analyze what they have viewed.

Another part of the series will be devoted to examining the "hidden persuader" appeal in commercials. Those engaged in the project are anxious to avoid an antagonistic approach to the medium. But they do want the students to think about what they watch rather than to simply gaze at their television sets.

Do you look with a critical eye at what you read, hear and see? This applies to all information, not just TV. A thinking person is one of God's noblest creatures.

"Give me now wisdom and knowledge." (2 Ch. 1:10)

Help us develop an awareness of what goes on around us, Jesus.

Poisoning Treatment Developed

September 19

Each year, 80,000 children suffer lead poisoning from chewing on objects such as wood which are covered with lead-based paint.

Dr. Gene H. Grabau, a St. Louis pediatrician, claims to have a solution for the problem. But he says nobody seems to be listening.

In a 10-year period, Dr. Grabau successfully treated nearly three dozen children who had a craving for unusual substances by giving them small doses of cobalt chloride. The chemical appeared to satisfy their hunger.

Although cobalt chloride has been shown safe in other medicines and Dr. Grabau's experience seems to bear this out, the medical community argues that extensive testing is required before it can be certified for general use.

"I think it's ridiculous to go to all the expense" involved in a full-scale testing program, the pediatrician asserted. "The medication I use costs nothing. All it takes is time, and I'm willing to provide that."

Is Dr. Grabau right? Is testing necessary? Is it possible to be too careful in health matters? The experts apparently disagree so it isn't possible for medical laymen to make a judgment. Still, we do know that frequently the obvious solution to a problem is "hidden in plain sight."

Ask God to help you not overlook the obvious.

"Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." (John 4:48)

Let us become attentive to Your promptings, Holy Spirit, so we don't fail to read the signs You set before us.

"Mother Goose" Cuts Traffic Deaths

September 20

In an effort to reduce traffic fatalities, the Maryland State Police use a tractor-trailer dubbed "Mother Goose" to clock the speed of drivers and issue tickets.

"Mother Goose" is only one of many marked and unmarked vehicles which monitor the roads. In 1974, the state issued 108,000 tickets; four years later, the number had climbed to 230,000. On one holiday weekend, traffic deaths in Maryland dropped by 14 percent, while the nationwide figure climbed 19 percent.

"Troopers get pretty sick of going out and picking up bodies off the road," says Col. T. S. Smith, state police superintendent. "Now they feel they're doing something about not having so many to pick up."

Col. Smith believes his program is more educational than punitive. "We've just got to convince people that speeding is dangerous," he says.

A speeding car or truck is a potentially lethal weapon. We have to exercise caution and control in all phases of our lives, but nowhere is this fact more dramatically true than when we're behind the wheel with our foot on the pedal.

"The wisdom of a prudent man is to discern his way, but the folly of fools is deceiving." (Prov. 14:8)

Guide us along life's journey, Father, and help us to keep a steady watch on the direction in which we're going.

A Special Kind of Vision

September 21

When other adoption agencies turned down Joyce Grieder's request for a child, though she had raised four of her own, she turned to Spaulding for Children, Westfield, N. J.

Spaulding, which specializes in "hard to place" children, didn't mind that Mrs. Grieder was blind. She and her husband had the quality Spaulding seeks—they want to love a child others rejected. It is one of two agencies in the country devoted to placing "un-adoptables" teens, racially mixed children, or those in some way disabled.

Thanks to Spaulding, the Grieders now have Joy, a 9-year-old black girl with Down's Syndrome. "From the moment we got Joy," says Mrs. Grieder, "we felt she was ours. Spaulding is a wonderful agency."

The agency has placed children with single men and women, a mother on welfare, and even young grandparents who want to raise a second family.

It takes a special kind of vision and a steady, powerful love to raise a child who has severe problems. In the past, irrelevant restrictions prevented adoption by otherwise qualified parents. Now, thank God, it is a bit easier for good adoptive parents and needy children to get together.

"And He took them (children) in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them." (Mk. 10:16)

Stimulate us to labor in any way we can, Jesus, to overcome barriers that keep people apart.

No Pornography in These Stores

September 22

Levere Montgomery of New Orleans made a decision a few years ago not to sell "girlie" magazines in his chain of more than 80 Time Saver convenience food stores.

He told a reporter doing a series of articles on pornography that the decision resulted in the loss of an estimated \$100,000 a year in lost sales opportunities.

However, he said, he couldn't separate his family life from his business life.

"The real question," he said, "is my desire to have an operation in which I feel comfortable and I can go home at night and be proud of . . . I just can't believe it's possible for me to raise children by preaching one philosophy and turning around in business and doing something just the opposite. I'd be hypocritical if I did that."

Would he take the same kind of action if his stores were losing money? Montgomery says: "I would hope that if I were brought to the acid test, I would make the same decision . . . or get out of this business."

Morality exacts a price, or it wouldn't be worth much. How high a price are we willing to pay? We probably won't know until a test comes. Pray for strength so you can meet your Maker with a clear conscience.

"Keep your conscience clear." (1 Pet. 3:16)

Holy Spirit, strengthen our resolve to overcome new challenges to our integrity as they come along.

A Trans-Atlantic Adventure

September 23

This is an adventure story about two balloons. One of them was the famous Double Eagle II, flown across the Atlantic by intrepid balloonists in the summer of 1978.

The other balloon had no name. All of nine inches in diameter, it was launched the same summer in Port Huron, Mich., by 13-year-old Jimmy Tuschling. Eventually it came to earth in Hertfordshire, England.

The only thing accompanying Jimmy's balloon was a plastic sandwich bag containing this note: "If you find this balloon, send it and this letter to me and we will be pen pals." He included his name and address.

Months later, he received this airmail letter: "Your balloon has really gone a long way. My boy friend and I found it last weekend as we were taking his dog for a walk . . . P.S. Your balloon is a bit bulky to send airmail, but the note we found is enclosed."

Thousands of youngsters launch balloons each year. Few of them will travel such long distances. Yet the act of launching, much like tossing a bottle with a note into the ocean, helps nurture a sense of adventure. Do you take the trouble to foster a spirit of adventure in young people?

"Show me the path of life." (Ps. 16:11)

*Grant us a measure of enthusiasm for life,
Jesus, and move us to foster it in others.*

Benefits of Technology

September 24

The “knife of light”—a scalpel that cuts with a high-powered laser beam instead of a steel blade—is now being used in every branch of surgery.

The hand-held scalpel, connected by a cord to a laser generator, was developed by Dr. Isaac Kaplan and engineer Uzi Sharon of Israel in 1972. With improvements by others, the laser scalpel has grown in effectiveness. It is now used in over 20 countries.

Prized for its precision in surgery, the beam’s thermal energy also cauterizes blood and lymph vessels as it cuts. This quality also makes it especially valued in surgery on hemophiliacs.

Human potential is almost limitless and its benefits can be vast. The catalyst is motivation.

Satisfaction in achievement is deepest when our efforts help someone in need. When you help another person, you use your talents in the best way.

“Whatever your hands find to do, do with your might.” (Ecc. 9:10)

Lord, remind me that the talents You gave me are to be used to make the world a little better.

Taking the Fear Out of Math

September 25

Two teachers, one in Georgia and the other in California, are in the forefront of an effort to take the fear out of math for students, seeking to replace it with excitement.

"There's a real crisis in learning in this country, especially in mathematics," said Harold Finkelstein, who teaches school in South Atlanta. Finkelstein believes in intensive questioning, setting up a competitive atmosphere in class which encourages students to participate.

Lenore Blum of Mills College, Cal., encourages interest by "starting out with regular math concepts, explaining them in terms students can relate to, such as how to chart the growth of a cell or the rate of inflation."

She also set up and directs the Math Science Network, whose purpose is to increase the participation of women in mathematical and scientific studies.

Fear of math, or of anything else, shuts down rational thinking. Teachers, parents and other adults can assist young people to be "thinkers" by a loving encouragement.

"Perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18)

Help us better appreciate, Father, that fear closes doors while love opens them.

Everybody Cooperated, Everybody Won

September 26

Four poor families in the run-down Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, N. Y., moved into a building totally rehabilitated by students of Westinghouse Vocational High School. It wasn't easy.

The priests of Sacred Heart Church acquired the burned-out structure for \$500 from the city, with a local councilman's help. It took some convincing for the Williamsburg Savings Bank to agree to a mortgage loan to cover the cost of materials.

It took innovative thinking by the high school principal, Norman Shapiro, to assign 30 of his students to labor for 10 months to rehabilitate the building.

Pratt Institute did the architectural work. Brooklyn Union Gas Co. donated the heating system.

The graduating seniors on the project are assured jobs. Everybody cooperated—and everybody got something out of it.

Why don't more community groups do this sort of thing? Probably because it's complicated, frustrating and time-consuming. Is it worth the effort? Ask the four families who now have decent housing.

"For the people had a mind to work." (Neh. 4:6)

Make us more conscious of the needs of our neighborhoods, Lord, and of the people who live there.

Floating Suit a Life Saver

September 27

It's called an Ugly Suit, but it's a thing of beauty to 92 persons stranded at sea who owe their lives to it. The manufacturer's name for the buoyant head-to-toe covering of neoprene foam (a superior insulator) is the Survival Suit.

It saved the life of a woman whose fishing boat sank 90 miles off Sitka, Alaska. She survived 10 days before she was picked up on an isolated beach.

And it protected George Jameson of Seaside, Ore., for 22 hours in water temperatures in the 50s when his tuna boat went under in heavy seas.

The neoprene traps nitrogen inside the suit, which gives a buoyancy to the outfit.

One crabfisherman wrote to the suit's inventor, James Hill: "A life jacket only prolongs the agony. It keeps you afloat until you freeze to death. Your Survival Suit saved my life."

A lot of beauty is in the eye of the beholder. To a child, there is beauty in a rag doll. To adults, there is beauty in life itself. To those whose faith keeps them afloat in the midst of tumult, there is surely beauty in God's sustaining hand.

"Put on for ever the beauty of the glory from God." (Bar. 5:1)

*Help us to take in the goodness and beauty
You have placed in the events of daily life,
Lord.*

A Place for "Runaway" Parents

September 28

There are places around the country for runaway youngsters, but Seattle, Wash., may have something unique in an agency to which parents can "run away" from their children—if only for an hour or so.

Called "The Parent Place" and started a few years ago by Sharon Stitt, a 39-year-old mother of four, the non-profit agency offers a round-the-clock phone service, classes in parenting, individual counseling—and a place to get away from it all.

Frequently mothers—and some fathers—simply need to be reassured that they're not alone. "Most of the problems are not psychiatric or heavy," says Mrs. Stitt. A typical discussion might center around coping with children who don't clean their rooms.

"I sat down with my kids," Mrs. Stitt recalls, "and told them each item I found in the living room that didn't belong there I would confiscate, and they had to pay 10 cents to retrieve it."

The rule applied to everybody in the house and Sharon Stitt admits, "I lost my own shoes a couple of times."

Children and parents do need some time away from each other. With distance and perspective can come a deeper appreciation of family life as God would like it to be. Make the most of opportunities to strengthen it.

"May the Lord grant you discretion and understanding." (1 Ch. 22:12)

*Father, lead us to a deeper understanding
of others and ourselves through the families
You have given us.*

Internal Magnets for Bees?

September 29

How do birds and insects and other animals migrate long distances when they can't see the sun or stars or familiar landmarks?

James Gould, a Princeton University professor, has discovered minute particles of magnetite in the stomachs of bees. He plans further experiments to determine whether they use this substance to pick up the earth's magnetic field, in the manner of a compass.

Prof. Gould, who has long sought a way to detect magnetism in such minute quantities in insects, learned of a device that did so in a casual conversation with another Princeton scientist.

It hasn't yet been proven what the bees use the magnetite for, but Prof. Gould believes there's certainly a reason for it.

"There are few cases where nature has put something useless in an animal," he said.

God's intricate design for the universe gradually unfolds as we respectfully but persistently seek it. In the stars or in a grain of sand, He is present as infinitely wise, intelligent and loving.

**"The bee is small among flying creatures,
but her product is the best of sweet things."
(Sir. 11:3)**

*Father, thank you for all the wonders of
Your creation.*

New Prison Program Tested

September 30

Ron Steeves is a prisoner in Minnesota but he walks to work, he punches a time clock by 7:25 a.m. each day, receives a salary, and pays room and board as well as state and federal taxes. He's saving for a color TV set.

Imprisoned for 16 years, Ron Steeves is part of an innovative program at Lino Lakes Correctional Facility in Minnesota. After deductions, he gets \$22.22 a week "take home pay" from his \$50 salary for his work on the prison printing press.

If the program, called Free Venture, is successful here and in other states where it is being tried as part of a federal government and private foundation effort, it could change the atmosphere in our prisons.

The aim of the effort is to give inmates responsibility in handling money, to prepare them for a real job on the outside and reimburse the state for some prison costs.

Too often prisons have encouraged lack of responsibility, leading to more criminal behavior. Projects such as these deserve support because they have the potential of turning lawbreakers into good citizens and taxpayers.

A Russian ex-convict named Fyodor Dostoevski wrote: "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons."

"Walk in the way of righteousness, in the paths of justice." (Prov. 8:20)

Remind us, Jesus, that by Your death You gave all people a "second chance."

Perpetual-Motion Teacher

October 1

Teaching language is a skill. The proof of success is in the student's ability to communicate in a foreign language.

John Rassias is a successful teacher. The professor of Romance languages and literature at Dartmouth immerses his students in French or Greek from the moment they enter his classroom.

He gets them communicating at a rapid rate, with little regard at first about accent, vocabulary or minor mistakes in grammar. Two hours of class drill a day plus four hours a week of lab work engage his beginners in almost non-stop conversation.

Prof. Rassias whirls around the class like a stand-up comedian challenging students to take part in mock phone conversations, press conferences and word games. Each student makes about 65 responses an hour.

"If you want to teach," says the popular teacher, "you have to be willing to walk out of class exhausted."

Good teaching, like good learning, demands hard work. Sometimes we appreciate both too late. If you have a favorite teacher, why not write or phone him or her just to say thanks?

"Become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed." (Rom. 6:17)

Deepen our respect for learning, Lord, and for those who have imparted it to us.

Art Blooms in Unexpected Places

October 2

Most athletes aren't artists—and most artists aren't professional athletes. But some people are both.

Among them: Rocky Graziano, boxer; Sam Posey, race car driver; Toller Cranston, ice skater; Tom Heinsohn, basketball coach; and Killer Kowalski, wrestler.

Their paintings, sculpture, cartoons and photographs were displayed at New York's Spectrum Gallery to raise money for the benefit of Harlem youngsters.

Rocky Graziano commented:

"When I first became a fighter, I didn't tell anyone I was a painter, because it felt funny saying it in those days. Like, you're a painter, and not a tough guy. Now, everybody paints."

Today's lifestyle is considerably freer than it was in the past. This freedom provides a God-given opportunity to develop more of our talents than ever before.

Use today's freer lifestyle in positive ways.

"You were called to freedom." (Gal. 5:13)

Increase our efforts, Jesus, to discover hidden powers within us and put them into action.

College Enhances Personal Growth

October 3

Comparative studies show that a college education is worth three times what it costs in terms of increased lifetime earnings.

But other returns are even more substantial. They have been tabulated by Howard Bowen, an economist, and published by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education. Those benefits include the following:

- The college-educated take greater care in the rearing of children.
- On the average, educated persons are healthier than others.
- College graduates are less attached to television, and are more likely to promote cultural endeavors.
- College enhances leadership qualities.
- The college-educated are more apt to involve themselves in the political process.

True, lots of narrow-minded people have degrees. But the desire to go through life with an eagerness to learn, deepens awareness and opens opportunities.

“The beginning of wisdom is the most sincere desire for instruction.” (Wis. 6:17)

*Help us to be reasonable in our convictions,
Lord, and open to new ideas and respectful of those of others.*

Bridging the Generation Gap

October 4

Members of a senior citizens club in Oakland, N. J., decided to build their own bridge across the generation gap. So they invited a group of young people from Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish to meet with them and plan a joint program.

The result: a dinner-dance for seniors and teenagers. The dinner, suggested by the young people, included hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans and salads. The desserts were brought by the youngsters and the parish supplied soda, coffee and tea.

Young people from all of the churches in the community were invited. More than 150 came, to the delight of the oldsters. The dance ended with a short prayer service.

Said one gray-haired woman at the close of the program: "Every one of those young people was absolutely lovely."

And a 14-year-old girl admitted, "It was a lot of fun dancing with some of the older people."

Gaps in understanding develop because no one takes the trouble to try and communicate. One person, with God's help, can bring various groups together. That person could be you.

"Give your servant therefore an understanding mind." (1 Kgs. 3:9)

Jesus, inspire us to bring people together by finding something they can do in common.

Obesity Causes Problems for Young

October 5

Being overweight can cause serious troubles for children. Dr. Theodore Isaac Rubin, a psychiatrist and author, puts it this way: "Being alive and fat in America is a pretty grim business."

Dr. William Weil, a nutritionist at the University of Maryland, traces discrimination against overweight people to kindergarten, where teachers subtly favor the thinner children.

Dr. Weil punctures these common myths of society:

- "Fat kids eat like pigs." This is rarely true. Sometimes they eat less. And in cases where they do eat more, it's usually because they have been driven to isolation by the taunts of fellow students or family members.

- "Fat kids are stupid." There is no truth here. A person's intelligence is not altered by weight.

- "Fat children don't exercise." This is usually not the case. But they need to do so at their own speed.

In our society, it is thought that thinner people are beautiful. In other cultures, it's the other way around. In no case does it make sense to ridicule a person who is "different." Whether it's skin color, religion or weight, the way to relate to people is to treat them as the unique and special individuals God made them to be.

"Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10)

Sharpen our perception, Jesus, so that we learn to appreciate people and not make fun of them.

Business Firms Help Young Offenders

October 6

Youth Opportunities Unlimited, an agency for youthful offenders in St. Louis, Mo., had an outstanding record of placing nine out of every ten graduates in colleges, jobs, or technical training. Then government funding ran out.

The Monsanto Fund, the philanthropic arm of the Monsanto Company, came to the rescue. Y.O.U. was kept going with a \$100,000 grant. Since then, Ralston-Purina, Pet Milk, Seven-Up, Laclede Glass and the Roblee Foundation have provided funds.

"I can't say enough about Monsanto," said William Zemel, director of Y.O.U. "Their moral support was critical to us when we thought the project might close."

More than 200 youths, in trouble with the law, have completed the 52-week program. The course includes career counseling, job placement, intensive followup and personal interest. It has been so successful that the St. Louis Juvenile Court may soon pick up the funding.

Corporate responsibility goes beyond concern for the quality of the company product. It covers such areas as the welfare of employees and the quality of life in society. It means that a company cares for something more than profit.

"Have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together." (1 Cor. 12:25-26)

Spur us to be better informed about community needs, Holy Spirit, so we will be motivated to do our share.

Small Investment Pays Off

October 7

A 25-cent investment was all that was needed to launch the career of Edgar Bergen, the ventriloquist, and his friend, Charlie McCarthy.

When he was in grammar school in Chicago, Edgar Bergen, who died recently at the age of 75, spent a quarter for a book called "Herrmann's Wizard Manual." It included directions for mastering the art of ventriloquism.

Bergen and McCarthy shared the spotlight for more than fifty years, in vaudeville, radio, movies and television.

Charlie McCarthy, the top-hatted, monacled dummy who traded quips with W. C. Fields, Don Ameche and John Barrymore, told Edgar Bergen more than once: "Bergen, with your brains and my personality, we'll go a long way."

Talent helps explain Edgar Bergen's success. But with it he combined qualities we can imitate: hard work, a sense of humor and a desire to lighten the lives of others. Do that, and with God's help, you'll be no "dummy."

"As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 Pet. 4:10)

Increase our love for You, Lord, and for those we meet on the road of life.

In Germany, a Jewish Renaissance

October 8

The announcement that a Jewish theological seminary will open in Heidelberg, Germany, came as joyful news. It reinforced the conviction that God remains faithful to His original covenant and that He has a special love for the Jewish people.

It was to the Jews that He revealed Himself, entrusting them with the message that there is but one God. It was among the Jews that His Son was born and lived and died. And throughout history He has preserved them from extinction that they may be "a light to the nations" (Isa. 49:6).

That the Jews survive even in Germany is a sign of God's love for them. There are 35,000 Jews in West Germany today but they have only 10 rabbis to serve them. Establishment of the new seminary should help rectify that situation.

The man behind the seminary is a Berlin-born American, Rabbi Nathan Levinson, who went to Germany as a chaplain in 1958 and remained there after his discharge in 1961. He expects that some of the first students will be non-Jews, a development he is encouraging because of his belief that "they should have the opportunity to learn not what someone else says about the Jews but rather in depth from Jewish scholars."

"Salvation is from the Jews." (John 4:22)

Father, bring all of us to an appreciation of our Jewish spiritual heritage.

Negative Comments Can Slow Healing

October 9

Negative comments made during surgical procedures can have a bad effect on unconscious patients according to Dr. David B. Cheek of San Francisco's Children's Hospital.

When more than 3,000 surgical patients were put under hypnosis, it was learned that they had recorded the smallest details of their operations. These included negative comments made by doctors and nurses.

Such comments are not consciously remembered, Dr. Cheek found. But in his view they can cause post-operative depression and can retard recovery or lead some patients simply to give up.

In a variety of ways, we are learning that healing involves a lot more than the correct application of technology. It is helped enormously by the attitudes the healer imparts to the sick person. The good healer communicates a sense of compassion.

Few of us can practice medicine in the strict sense. But the development of a positive, caring attitude can speed the recovery of the sick.

**"Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed."
(Jer. 17:14)**

Make us more aware, Lord, that healing touches the spirit as well as the body.

Education Put on Contract Basis

October 10

Education is a cooperative venture involving students, parents, teachers and administrators.

That's the philosophy behind successful innovative programs and it works even in deprived areas. Reading scores at one such school, for instance, advanced more than a half year in terms of achievement in just one year.

Called Operation Higher Achievement, the program took into consideration the fact that inner-city parents "distrust the schools," according to one administrator. So first, he said, "we convinced them that we wanted to help—then we showed them how to help."

The program involves the issuance of contracts in which the school promises better student performance. Parents agree to provide wholesome food, appropriate clothing and to encourage reading and study habits. Teachers commit themselves to greater cooperation with the families. Parents visit the school and teachers visit the homes.

Education is never easy. Yet it's the key to a decent job and all that "making it" in society entails.

Do you take an interest in your children's studies? One of the best things you can do is encourage them to read. You too can make a difference.

**"Be silent, and I will teach you wisdom."
(Job 33:33)**

God of Wisdom, help us to be teachers and learners all our lives.

Historic Island Offered for Sale

October 11

Iona, the Scottish isle of saints and kings, was up for sale recently. Located off the west coast of Scotland, the three-mile-long historic spot was put on the market by the Duke of Argyll who needed money to pay estate taxes.

Iona was the place from which St. Columba, an Irish monk, spread the Christian faith throughout Britain from the abbey he founded there in the year 563. The Iona Community, a group of Presbyterian clergy and laymen, still uses the island each summer. There is a year-round population of 90.

The island also has the distinction of being the burial site of 38 Scottish kings, among whom was Malcolm, whose death at the hands of Macbeth was immortalized by Shakespeare.

"I'm very sad about the whole affair," said the Duke. "It is with great reluctance that Iona is being sold."

Historic sites and memories play an important role in our religious beliefs. But the faith that gives them meaning is a living thing. It lives, not in rocks and shrines, but in the hearts of people. It is nourished by moments of wonder and prayer. And it is tested by our response to the needs of today.

**"Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ."
(Rom. 10:17)**

Remind us to base our faith, Lord, more on the deeds of the present than on the monuments of the past.

A new breed of inventors, scientists and engineers is beginning to emerge in the Third World. They are bent on developing “appropriate technology”—technology which uses the skills and materials at hand—to meet the needs of the people with simple, low-cost hardware and processes.

- In Lesotho, southern Africa, these new inventors have developed low-cost materials for housing construction.

- In Colombia, they have designed a pedal-powered grinder to process yuca, an edible plant. The grinder does in a day what previously took two months.

- In the Philippines, engineers are producing machinery adapted to local farming needs.

- In India, researchers are converting biological wastes into gas fuel for cooking and heating.

Dr. S. S. Ramphal of Guyana speaks of “the growth of a feeling of self-confidence in a society that can solve its own problems and devise its own solutions, relying largely on its own capability. It can neither be bought nor taught.”

Every country must find ways of feeding its people and relieving the back-breaking work of survival. Western technology isn’t always applicable to Third-World conditions. Self-help projects also do much to enhance the dignity of native populations.

“I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.” (Jer. 3:15)

Holy Spirit, lead us to encourage others to develop their own ways of solving their problems.

One Answer to Child Abuse

October 13

In 1970, a woman known only as Jolly K asked Leonard Lieber, a social worker, to help her stop abusing one of her daughters.

After she had made some progress with his help, Lieber challenged her to do something about the problem herself. Together they started an organization that came to be called Parents Anonymous (PA). There are now 900 chapters nationwide.

About 20,000 phone calls are handled annually on PA's hot-line system. A talk with a reassuring counselor can sometimes save a child's life in a crisis situation. But months of talking, hand-holding and mutual aid go into the effort of helping parents break away from the practice of unleashing wrath on their children.

About 1.5 million cases of child abuse were reported in 1978. Several times that number probably went unreported. Jolly K—who had been abused as a child herself—realized that what helped her could be used to assist other abusive parents. She didn't keep it to herself. She used her own experience to help others.

God sends good ideas and actions to others through you. Make sure your "output" is effective.

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger." (Eph. 6:4)

Let our failures be put to good use in the service of others, Father.

A Living Gift

October 14

The parents of Eileen Billington of Philadelphia gave their daughter a very special gift—the gift of sight.

In 1972, Eileen, at 21, lost her vision to a disease that damages the cornea.

Four years later, her mother died of cancer. Her eyes were removed and brought to Willis Eye Clinic, where one cornea was transplanted into her daughter's left eye. Doctors will operate only on one eye at a time because it is so risky. The surgery was a success.

Shortly after, Eileen's 51-year-old father died of heart failure. His eyes were removed and rushed to the clinic. One of his corneas was transplanted to his daughter's right eye.

Again, the operation was a success—Eileen can see. She is the only person ever to have received cornea transplants from both parents.

Even after death we can still help others. One way is to donate the healthy organs of our body for transplant. More and more people are participating in this kind of self-giving. Why not think about it?

**“So death is at work in us, but life in you.”
(2 Cor. 4:12)**

*Lord, give us the courage to face death
with a generous heart.*

Are You a "Crunch" Person?

October 15

The kind of food you like tells something about the sort of person you are, according to nutritionist Elizabeth Mills, a professor of home economics at Central Michigan University.

"I love crunchy things," says Ms. Mills. "My choice of crunch over soft shows I really like to get my teeth into things in my everyday life."

People who go for something soft, like soup or a souffle instead of a steak, are the sort who want to get through the day with little conflict, according to Ms. Mills.

She has observed that people who eat bright foods wear colorful clothes and live in homes with intense, lively colors. When it comes to work habits, she has found that those who have five different things going on at once tend to eat their meat, potatoes and vegetables at the same time.

One of Ms. Mills' students disliked dinner. It turned out that her father used to save this meal for complaining and subjecting his children to sharp questioning.

Whether or not Ms. Mills' theories hold up, we do give ourselves away in many small ways. But whatever our basic personalities, we are all called by God to radiate His joy into the lives of others.

"Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31)

Remind us of what's important in our lives, Holy Spirit, and show us how to concentrate on those things.

Freedom, Not Force, Is the Key

October 16

Are you a frustrated father or a stage-door mother? If so, you may be setting up your child for failure and yourself for unfulfilled expectations.

"The problem occurs during the parent's early years," according to Harriet Schnur, a child psychotherapist. "The parent is unable to develop good feelings about himself or satisfaction from his own life experience. He's unable to let the child develop independently."

Thus parents who never achieved greatness in sports, or on the stage or in business try to mold their child into champion athletes, Broadway stars or successful executives.

Parental aspirations for children are good, says Dr. Maria Piers, a child development expert. "The question is, are you forcing the child at gunpoint or letting him fall in love with a particular field" in a natural way—a way that respects his individuality.

Live your own life but don't force your goals on others. God leaves us free to make what we will of the opportunities that come our way and we should do the same.

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Cor. 3:17)

*Deepen our trust in young people, Lord,
and enable us to respect their freedom of
choice.*

Not-So-Hard to Adopt

October 17

It was almost unheard of until recent years, but children with Down's Syndrome (Mongolism) are being adopted in increasing numbers. And, in most cases, the adoptions are working out well.

Janet and Louis Marchese of White Plains, N. Y., took Todd Joseph at birth on a trial basis because of the plea of a social worker. They had two children of their own, plus two adopted Korean girls and a Vietnamese boy—a very special family indeed. Though frightened at the prospect, they accepted Todd because “we felt he needed us.”

“He was absolutely the most beautiful child I had seen,” recalls Mrs. Marchese. They later decided to keep him permanently. Like most families that adopt these children, the Marchese are nurturing people. They are very affectionate. And Down's Syndrome youngsters are known to be affectionate.

A broader understanding of Down's Syndrome and increased government educational services have shown that they can acquire many skills that were not thought possible. Children with handicaps deserve homes as much as other children. Left in institutions, they seldom develop.

“For a web begun,” runs an old proverb, “God supplies the thread.” Strong and generous families willing to make an act of faith in a hard-to-place child will find to their satisfaction the truth of this saying.

“Beloved, we are God's children.” (1 John 3:2)

*Lord, open our eyes to the beauty of love
and give us the courage to give it away.*

Peace Is Hard Work

October 18

In his State of the Union message one year, President Carter said that just one of the American Poseidon submarines “carries enough warheads to destroy every large and medium-sized city in the Soviet Union.”

The nuclear-powered Poseidon submarine is relatively invulnerable to attack. The United States has 31 such submarines and about half of them are at sea at any given time.

Additionally, it has been estimated that the combined nuclear arsenals of the United States and Russia provide the equivalent of 15 tons of TNT for every one of the four billion people on earth. Isn't that a horrible thought!

Few of us are experts on the technical issues then aspects of disarmament treaties. But peace is something that all of us have to work for. If that work involves making ourselves familiar with technical issues then we simply have to get to it and let our leaders know what we expect of them.

Peace is not something that can be left to diplomats and politicians. It begins with the individual and demands knowledge and involvement and action on all levels of society—the family as well as the community of nations. Christ came and brought His peace but He left the art of peace-making to us.

“My peace I give to you.” (John 14:27)

Jesus, help me to become an apostle of peace.

Families Help Cons Go Straight

October 19

“Family home evening” is an old Mormon tradition. Over the past 13 years, in Utah State Prison, it has helped more than 400 convicts go straight.

The tradition is that, on Monday nights, every member of a devout Mormon family stays home. They pray, sing, and share time together.

Families have been encouraged to adopt an inmate at the prison. Some come several hundred miles to spend time with a particular prisoner.

“These are lifetime relationships,” says Herb Guerts, coordinator of the program. In almost every convict’s homelife “you will find a complete breakdown in family relationships,” Guerts adds.

The voluntary program involves screening by both prison and church officials and is open to all prisoners—murderers, rapists, drug dealers. Only 20 percent of those released get into trouble again.

Poor family relationships—coldness, neglect, abuse—are behind much of the trouble people get into later on in life. Good family ties can often repair the harm. The family is God’s chief means for the renewal of society.

“The purpose of a family,” said Rosemary Haughton, author and mother, “is for the formation of people who are able to love.”

**“I was in prison and you came to Me.”
(Mt. 25:36)**

Help us realize, Holy Spirit, that our families can be a powerful force for good.

The Tragedy of Suicide

October 20

There's hardly a community in this country that hasn't known the tragedy of suicide by a young person. What makes the tragedy so great is that many of these suicides could have been prevented.

One expert, Arthur S. Freese, a medical writer, says that 75 percent of those who commit suicide give warnings of their intentions ahead of time. Freese is the author of a pamphlet issued by the Public Affairs Committee.

Some estimates place the number of attempted suicides by young people between the ages of 15 and 24 at 400,000, with 4,000 succeeding.

Freese says that suicidal attempts are frequently an appeal for help. He warns that "one of the most dangerous myths is the belief that those who threaten or talk about suicide won't go through with it."

What should people be alert to? Freese says that warning signs include the absence of friends, disposal of treasured possessions, behavioral changes, withdrawal, the presence of tension and anxiety, reliance on alcohol, truancy and lack of interest in school affairs.

Despite outward devil-may-care signs, young people are going through a difficult period as they reach for adulthood. Try to make yourself available to them.

"The elder shall serve the younger." (Gen. 25:23)

Jesus, keep before me the importance of friendly contacts with young people.

In Wyckoff, N. J., there's a Grand Union supermarket designed by Milton Glaser, one of this country's leading graphic design specialists. Among the publications he has designed are New York, Esquire, Cue and Paris Match.

Although he says he knows nothing about merchandise marketing, Glaser took on the job of designing the supermarket at the request of a friend. If the experiment is successful the themes will be introduced in all the Grand Union stores.

Glaser gave the Wyckoff store an entirely new identity. The shopping carts are red, red has been introduced into the store's advertising and into its logo, there are "red-dot specials," and store employees now wear Glaser-designed aprons and an identifying button.

The button carries this message: "Ask me. I'm here to help."

Anyone who has ever wandered around supermarket aisles in a confused state, can appreciate that message. It's simple and direct and holds the promise of assistance.

It also reflects the spirits of Christianity. Christians are supposed to be bearers of Divine love.

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2)

Jesus, grant that those who seek my help will not have done so in vain.

Equal Pay for the Handicapped

October 22

“The laborer is worthy of his hire” (Luke 10:7)—unless the laborer is handicapped.

At least that’s the view of American law, which allows an injustice to continue by permitting employers to pay the disabled less than they pay other workers—and less even than the minimum wage.

The intent of the law was to encourage employment of the handicapped. It was based on the assumption that the disabled could not produce as much work as others and that therefore industry needed an incentive to hire them.

That incentive was profit. Among those businesses which have profited most are some of the so-called “sheltered workshops”—small businesses employing mostly handicapped people to make handcraft items.

There are about 3,800 such workshops around the country, some of them paying employees less than \$1 an hour.

Clearly there is an injustice here—especially so where the productivity of disabled exceeds the productivity of other workers, as it frequently does. Is it any wonder that the disabled have become the latest group in our society to organize?

“He who . . . despises the gain of oppressions . . . will dwell on the heights.” (Is. 33:15-16)

Father, grant me the courage to support the handicapped when they seek equal rights.

Runaway Teenager Reports to Class

October 23

Kathy Nelson of Bremerton, Wash., ran away from home and lived to tell about it. The girl, 17, was lucky.

She hopped trucks through the West, going to Wyoming and then California. After a week of aimless wandering, she called her parents and told them she was coming home.

On the last leg of her journey, the driver she rode with fell asleep at the wheel. Kathy ended up in the hospital with injuries that included a bad cut near her eye.

When Kathy Nelson, clad in a bathrobe and with her head shaved from medical treatment, told her 50 fellow students what had happened, you could hear a pin drop.

"I tried to get the point across," she said, "that hitchhiking wasn't what it was cracked up to be. Some of the girls started crying. They were all pretty shocked."

Their teacher later reported that one of Kathy's tearful listeners was a girl on the verge of running away herself.

If parents and children can face and try to resolve their difficulties, much suffering can be avoided. Kathy Nelson was fortunate. Other runaways never get a second chance.

**"Listen to me . . . O children; and act accordingly, that you may be kept in safety."
(Sir. 3:1)**

Remind us to take stock of our family situation, Lord, so we can correct any deficiencies.

A Remedy for Shyness

October 24

Does your heart pound, do you perspire or blush when you meet strangers or find yourself in an unfamiliar situation? If so, you may be shy.

For people whose shyness is a major problem, workshops are springing up around the country. One is at the University of Connecticut in Stamford.

The causes of shyness are diverse, according to Barbara Powell, a psychologist who teaches in the workshop.

"It sometimes stems from being an only child or growing up in a family that did not converse much," she told an interviewer. "Or a person may have had an unpleasant experience with a stranger."

Workshops foster role-playing and encourage participants to start conversations with others and report on their progress.

We can all point to factors in our past that hold us back today. But yesterday is gone. God has given us today and tomorrow in which to make a fresh start, whether it's a conversation or a career.

"Have confidence, because there is hope; you will be protected." (Job 11:18)

Help us to concentrate on the opportunities of the present, Jesus, than on the problems of the past.

His Blood Boiled

October 25

Zoltan Gordon Bana is not a man to be trifled with.

The New York stamp dealer was accosted by two youths in a deserted subway station one afternoon in the city's financial district. They grabbed for his briefcase and began punching him.

After the robbers took \$90 and a watch, they ordered him to strip.

"My Hungarian blood began to boil," he said later.

As the youths ran away, Bana followed them, shouting. He was clad only in shoes and socks and used his briefcase to cover himself.

"I couldn't believe what I saw," said policeman Frank Weber. He gave chase and caught one attacker. The other one got away.

There's something cheering about this victim who fought back. It is good to know that there are people with the courage to resist mindless violence.

But we should be careful to develop a comprehensive sense of justice—one which is offended even when it is others who are being victimized. The story of the Good Samaritan is as appropriate today as it was when Christ first told it.

"Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37)

Lord, don't let us take violence and injustice for granted but give us the courage and determination to oppose them.

Glimmer of Hope for Slum Dwellers

October 26

Living in shanties made of cardboard, mud and tin is a way of life for millions of families in Latin America. Father Alberto Jiminez of Bogota, Colombia, is helping to change that for some Colombian families.

Father Jiminez directs an operation called *Servivienda* (House Service) which turns out 22 prefabricated houses a day for slum dwellers. So far, some 4,000 low-income families have found a decent place to live.

The homes, costing as little as \$300 for a one-bedroom house and \$700 for three bedrooms, are made of cement-sheet, and tubular steel. They are financed through long-term loans at low interest rates.

Servivienda also provides social, economic and spiritual training for the dwellers in the barrios around Bogota.

As we know from the failures of many low-income housing projects in this country, better physical conditions alone aren't enough. People frequently need other forms of help, such as job opportunities, to regain their sense of dignity.

Don't let the trend to budget cuts lead you to forget the needs of the poor.

**"He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed."
(Prov. 19:17)**

Remind us, Lord, of Your wish that we respond to the cries of the poor and oppressed.

Huge Machine Devours Scrap

October 27

The huge machines—seven of them—stand in various locations around the country, each of them testimony in a way to man's ability to solve the problems of the day when there is a willingness to do so.

The machines are called Prolerizers and they were developed by Proler International Corporation. They are a block long and five stories high and they can pulverize an automobile in 30 seconds, turning it into chunks of scrap metal about the size of your fist.

Ironically, one of the machines stands along the Jersey City waterfront, facing the Statue of Liberty with its inscription, "Give me your tired and your poor . . ."

It is located there because most of the 200,000 tons of scrap metal the machine produces is exported, and so the scrap can move directly from the yard to nearby freighters.

The machine was developed in 1958 when abandoned automobiles, washing machines and the like were scarring the landscape everywhere.

The point of the story is this: Men know how to solve the problems they create. There is no need for despair in the face of complex social problems such as poverty, functional illiteracy, pollution, etc. The Creator has given us the skills to overcome them.

"All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." (Num. 14:21)

Holy Spirit, help us to overcome the inertia that sometimes makes it difficult for us to confront contemporary problems.

Faith Survives Adversity

October 28

Despite the political success that Communism has enjoyed in some countries, the failure of atheism as a philosophy of life was never more apparent than in the outpouring of love for Pope John Paul II on his return to Poland in June, 1979.

The participation of millions of persons provided the exclamation mark to a fact that is generally known although not much publicized: faith in God has a stronger pull than faith in the Communist state.

Results of a survey taken among high school students in Poland between 1968 and 1971 bear this out. More than a thousand students from varying backgrounds in six cities were asked about their beliefs. The findings were so devastating to atheism that they were suppressed and it wasn't until recently that they became known in the West.

After more than 25 years of unrelenting atheistic indoctrination, nowhere did the professed atheists among the students number more than five percent. In each area, more than 75 percent of the students described themselves as "religious" or "very religious."

The survival of faith under the most adverse conditions speaks volumes about mankind's deepest yearnings. The Scriptures are full of the wonders wrought by faith.

"Your faith has made you well." (Luke 17:19)

Lord, increase my faith that I may do great things in Your name.

Excuses, Excuses

October 29

You might think you've heard everything by way of excuses but you really haven't. To prove the point here's a collection of excuses recently published by the New Jersey Policemen's Benevolent Association. They're all from drivers involved in automobile accidents.

"Coming home I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don't have."

"The guy was all over the road; I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him."

"An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my vehicle and vanished."

"I had been learning to drive with power steering; I turned the wheel to what I thought was enough and found myself in a different direction going the opposite way."

"In an attempt to kill a fly, I drove into a telephone pole."

"The pedestrian had no idea which direction to go, so I ran over him."

Excuses aren't always quite so funny but they're always imaginative. How much better it would be if all of us faced the truth, admitted our errors, and stopped blaming everyone else.

"You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:32)

Lord, help me to avoid rationalizing my mistakes.

Science Saving Newborn Babies

October 30

Hospitals and medical centers today are giving special attention to the needs of newborn babies. Institutions such as the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia are now able to save infants whose chances for survival would have been minimal ten years ago.

"We're dealing with patients who, if they survive, have full life expectancies," says Dr. John Downes, an anesthesiologist at Children's Hospital.

"The general philosophy here is to go all out for each kid."

One such aid is for premature infants suffering from "respiratory distress syndrome." A drug called surfactant helps the infant to retain air so that his lungs won't collapse between breaths.

Ten years ago, babies weighing 2½ pounds were considered in grave danger. Today, the threshold has been lowered to one-half pound.

The miracle of birth sometimes requires other miracles—those of parental love and scientific skill—to see infants through severe crisis, in cooperation with God's life-giving design.

"In His hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind." (Job 12:10)

Remind us, Holy Spirit, of the tremendous hope for the future that a truly humane science offers us.

Teacher Turns Down a Raise

October 31

William Vasilakes of Grand Forks, N.D., got a mixed reaction when he refused a \$621 increase in his \$14,000-a-year teacher's salary.

Troubled about the effects of inflation, Vasilakes called his action "something I decided to do for my own conscience."

His local teacher's union was not enthralled by the move, preferring instead to see executives of large corporations take a pay cut

The school board commended him for turning back his increase.

"I remember the Depression years," said Vasilakes, 55. Those memories have made this inflation phase more painful to me than to some of the younger teachers.

"I've been broke all my life," he added. "I know what to do."

Taking a pay cut is hard to do. But we all could do a bit toward curbing inflation by avoiding waste.

Pray for the guidance to distinguish the essential from the trivial when you spend your hard-earned money.

"If riches increase, set not your heart on them." (Ps. 62:10)

Give strength to our attempts to be wise stewards of Your creation, Father.

She Sailed the Globe Alone

November 1

Naomi James wasn't only the first woman to sail alone around the world—she broke a record while doing it.

The 29-year-old housewife from Devon, England, piloted her 53-foot yacht around the globe in 272 days, a couple of days faster than Sir Francis Chichester, whose record was set in 1968, a decade earlier.

Mrs. James' worst moments occurred off Cape Horn when 30-foot waves capsized her craft. "It is impossible to describe that horrible feeling of being utterly out of control," she said later.

Another hardship was the silence she endured for weeks when her radio failed. She also had to steer by hand for 2,000 miles when her self-steering gear broke after a storm.

As humans, we value being "in control." The philosopher Plato once described the troubled human soul as a ship whose captain had lost control. Ask God for the good sense to anticipate problems so that you may remain "captain of your ship" in all circumstances.

St. Paul describes Christian maturity as the state when we are no longer "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14).

"We are to grow up in every way." (Eph. 4:15)

*Help us to advance in wisdom, Holy Spirit,
so that we may plot our course amid the
reefs and shoals of life.*

Love, Chinese Style

November 2

It is easy to become excited over some of the changes taking place in China. But the fact that tensions have eased slightly ought not blind us to the realities of life under Communism.

For instance, much is being made of the fact that China no longer officially frowns on the notion of romantic love—the attraction of two people for each other. Although most Chinese marriages are still arranged by the parents, it is now theoretically possible to build a family unit on love.

However, China still subjugates the family to the state by “recommending” the proper age for marriage. They also establish “birth quotas” and impose other restrictions.

The Chinese take family life very seriously. That’s one reason they want to control it. It is within the family that values are developed, as the Old Testament author knew when he wrote: “Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and reject not your mother’s teaching” (Prov. 1:8).

Here in this country threats to family life come not from law but from the developing cult of pleasure—“what gives me pleasure is good for me.”

“A man’s glory comes from honoring his father, and it is a disgrace for children not to respect their mother.” (Sir. 3:11)

Today, Jesus, let me begin the work of strengthening my own family.

How to Converse With the Deaf

November 3

On "Christopher Closeup," our weekly television program, Carol Tipton interprets for the deaf our interviews with guests. Carol is an expert in Sign Language.

You too can speak to the deaf, even if you do not know Sign Language. And they can speak to you. They are not mute. Today many more can be found in schools and in regular jobs. Here are some tips on communicating, from a doctor who works with the deaf:

- Look directly at the person while speaking.
- Speak slowly and clearly, using facial expressions.
- If the deaf person has difficulty comprehending, rephrase your thought rather than repeat it exactly.
- Use paper and pencil, but don't rely entirely on writing.
- Even if an interpreter is present, talk directly to the deaf person, who can turn to the interpreter if necessary.

Finally, don't restrict conversations to vital business matters. Deaf people have feelings and opinions. They enjoy humor, gossip and small talk, all of which helps people to relax and work together harmoniously.

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." (Rom. 12:15)

Empower us, Holy Spirit, with the means of carrying on meaningful conversations with all we meet.

Career Field Can Save Lives

November 4

Looking for a career with real growth potential? If you have a bent for science, then toxicology may be the place for you.

"This is a hot, new professional field," says Gary Lage, director of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. His institution is one of four in the country offering degrees in the detection of poisonous substances.

According to Dr. Lage, fewer than 100 persons have obtained college degrees in toxicology in the past 15 years. "Yet more than 1,000 new toxicologists are required right now—and another 1,000 in the next five years—because nearly everything we eat, wear or use has chemicals in it."

"The goal," he says, "is to determine toxicity before a chemical is used, not a decade later . . . Hopefully this will end those horror stories about unwarranted dumping and burying of chemical wastes into holes and rivers."

A toxicologist, or "poison detective," could save thousands of lives in his or her career. As society grows more complex, the need grows for specialists who can determine ahead of time the potential dangers of various chemical compounds used to preserve food or make new synthetic products.

"I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage but that of many." (1 Cor. 10:33)

Inspire us, Father, to consider careers that serve others.

Youngster is Quite a Welder

November 5

He's only eight years old but, with his blond curls tucked under his welder's helmet, Donny Kanz of Hendricks, Minn., knows how to handle a blowtorch.

"He's got his own bench and his own welder," says the boy's father, Don Kranz. "He does a pretty good job too. If he keeps with it, he'll be really good."

By the age of six Donny had made and sold about 50 hammers to people in town. The price: 50 cents.

Donny cuts metal on a bandsaw, welds two pieces together, grinds the rough spots and spray paints the completed product.

His dad supervises the work. The boy hurries home from school each day to get into his work togs and start welding.

It's the rare person who knows at such an early age what he wants to do with his life. But even if Donny changes his mind at a later date, he's learned a lot about doing a good day's work.

It's also important that youngsters learn how to play, to be children. Parents have no easy time trying to balance family life between work, play, communication, worship and lots of affection.

"Let no one despise your youth." (1 Tim. 4:12)

Lord, help fathers and mothers develop a sense of balance in their children.

22,000 Vaccinations a Day

November 6

Using his "peace gun," or jet vaccine inoculator, Dr. Robert A. Hingson and his staff can give injections to 22,000 children in one afternoon.

The invention, which has a high velocity projectile, can pierce through clothing, and is credited with eliminating the scourge of smallpox. According to the World Health Organization, there has not been a recorded case since October, 1977.

Dr. Hingson is now taking aim on other diseases which are preventable but aggravated by malnutrition. WHO estimates that, of 80 million babies born each year in the Third World, between five and eight percent will die before their first birthday of such diseases as diphtheria, TB and tetanus.

The Alabama physician, a Baptist deacon who was poor and sickly as a child, has organized the Brother's Brother Foundation which supplies nourishing food, medical aid and educational materials to developing countries.

Dr. Hingson says his inspiration came from the words of Jesus:

"Let the little children come to Me," (Mark 10:14)

Never let me underestimate, Jesus, the power of Your words or the good one person can accomplish in Your name.

Puppets With a Powerful Message

November 7

Two women and six puppets may hold the key to providing education in regular classes for thousands of handicapped children.

Federal and state laws now require that handicapped children get as much of their education as possible in classrooms with non-handicapped children. But such "mainstreaming" has often failed because of the negative attitudes of so-called normal youngsters.

To help change these attitudes, Barbara Aiello, a teacher of the handicapped, enlisted the services of Ingrid Crepeau, a puppeteer on a Washington TV show.

After tryouts with thousands of children, they have come up with six puppets—two ordinary ones and one each which is blind, deaf, palsied or retarded. With simple dialogues, they demonstrate that, while handicapped youngsters are different, they can lead full, satisfying lives.

Parents are usually the cause of prejudiced attitudes in their children. They can also, thank God, be their best teachers. Do you encourage in your children a positive, openhearted approach to those who are "different?"

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones." (Mt. 18:10)

Spur us, Father, to be comfortable with diversity so that we may see Your beauty shine in every human being.

Energy Shortage: Privation or Opportunity?

November 8

The energy crunch has pinched a nerve in American life—the bond between us and our cars.

Those who analyze behavior say that for the ordinary American the car provided an opportunity to achieve a greater degree of freedom and independence once enjoyed only by the rich.

They say that it also provided an opportunity to break away from small-town restrictions or from city confinement and that it exerted as great an impact on family life as did television.

It also had its egalitarian aspects, erasing distinctions of age or position once the driver got behind the wheel.

For young people, the right to drive took on symbolic meaning with the attainment of a license.

The automobile, in short, became part of the “good life.”

Driving cutbacks have been painful but there have been some positive developments. There is a tendency for families to spend more time together. Neighbors have begun to car-pool. All of us have been tapping our ingenuity, walking more, perhaps riding a bike, and becoming much more aware of environmental concerns.

“You did show me the path of life; in Your presence there is fulness of joy.” (Ps. 16:11)

Jesus, show me how to discard the excess baggage in my life.

Holocaust Course Catches On

November 9

Teaching about the Holocaust—the systematic destruction of six million Jews by the Nazis during World War II—has become part of the social studies curriculum at scores of schools across the country.

The first school to institute a regular Holocaust course was Monument Regional High School in Great Barrington, Mass., in 1973.

According to Dr. Franklin H. Littell, executive director of the National Institute on the Holocaust, Philadelphia, the main reasons for such courses are to guard against another Holocaust, to help us learn from history, and simply because such a catastrophe once happened.

Today, such courses are taught on the high school and college levels across the country.

The course is generally well received, according to school officials, even where there are few Jewish students. Only eight percent of the school population in Great Barrington was Jewish when the course was started there.

Hatred pushes in where love is absent. If we permit one group to be persecuted, tomorrow it may be our turn. God, who is unchanging love, expects our love to be universal.

**“God is love, and he who abides in love
abides in God, and God abides in him.”
(1 John 4:16)**

*Deepen our respect for every human being,
Creator of all.*

Jobs-a-Plenty in One Small Town

November 10

Warsaw, Ind., is a small town which had a unique problem until recently. The community, with a population of 10,000 in the rural northern part of the state, needed to attract 1,000 new workers in two years.

Warsaw is the site of the world's largest printing company, two orthopedic supply firms and a castings manufacturer. Property taxes actually went down in a recent five-year period.

Warsaw's problem was on the way to a solution as soon as it was publicized. Mail and phone calls poured in from all over the country.

"You could work 24 hours a day here if you wanted to," said one police official who, like many other residents, holds down two jobs.

The good fortune of one town points up the misfortune of so many others. Unemployment is, along with inflation, a haunting fact of life for many millions in this country.

Is there anything you can do to help one person find a job? You could be an instrument of peace for someone who needs it.

"May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all men." (1 Thess. 3:12)

Enable us to see jobless rates as persons in need of stable employment, Lord, and not as mere statistics.

Ex-Convicts Work With Students

November 11

Prisoners and ex-prisoners are sharing their experiences with the public in greater numbers than ever before in an effort to turn young people away from crime or assist community programs.

In Wayne, N.J., for instance, two former prisoners lecture high school students about the problems of living in institutions.

The students are involved in Christian service projects which find them visiting area nursing homes.

One of the former prisoners draws a parallel between jail and nursing homes:

"The thing is, you're confined, you can't be with the people you want to be with. You can't express yourself. That's the hard part."

We seldom think of nursing homes being like jails. But they can be similar, unless the people who are confined have regular visits from those who are dear to them.

Do you know someone whose life would be brightened by a visit or phone call from you? Why not do it—today.

**"Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?"
(Mt. 25:37)**

Let us treasure our freedom, Lord, by showing concern for those who no longer have it to the fullest.

Genius Is Hard Work

November 12

Thomas Edison, one of the greatest inventors of all time, was “all thumbs.”

According to his latest biographer, Robert Conot, Edison couldn't drive a car or catch a ball. He was a bumbling engineer and a disastrous businessman. He left it to others to make models and build machinery.

“My business is thinking,” said Edison.

He snorted when he was called a genius. “Sticking to it is genius!”

Edison stuck to it and acquired 1,093 patents. Among the industries he founded by his “thinking”: electric power and light (\$150 billion); phonograph and recording (\$1.5 billion); motion picture (\$2 billion); and electrical appliance (\$15 billion).

A lot of people who tried just as hard as Edison never invented a thing. But how many with his brilliance never accomplished much because they never really tried?

Edison's failures are forgotten because his successes were so great. When you are downcast because you are unable to achieve a particular goal, think of Thomas Edison and his inability to catch a ball.

“Make haste to answer me, O Lord! My spirit fails!” (Ps. 143:7)

*Help us develop an optimistic outlook,
Lord, so our failures do not weigh us down.*

Like Father, Like Son

November 13

Widower Bill Patterson, 63, a retired city employee in Chapel Hill, N.C., likes doing things with his son, Bill, 23. They share a house and jog four miles together each day. Both graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of North Carolina's political science program—the senior Patterson in 1950 and the younger in 1977.

Now father and son are enrolled in the university's law school.

The elder Patterson felt the need to take stock of his life after his wife's death. "I decided I was going to have to restructure my whole life after that." Further education was part of that restructuring.

Young Bill Patterson is interested in government service. His father would like to go into private practice, if circumstances allow.

A deep personal loss can lead to despair—or it can become a means of growth. It's not so much what happens to us in life that counts, but how we react to what happens. God wants us to make the most of what comes.

"He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." (Is. 53:4)

Let us learn, Father, how You made the tragedy of Your Son's death into a life-giving act for all the world.

She Came, She Saw, She Acted

November 14

At the age of 85, Ella Rigney had a lot of reasons for taking a good rest. She had been a Vista Volunteer and she was returning to her home in San Francisco.

But Mrs. Rigney was disturbed by the sight of little children playing on the streets and sidewalks near her home. She thought they needed a place in which to enjoy the outdoors in safety.

So she asked a local church to donate a small, overgrown lot. With the help of friends, she leveled the land and planted a lawn edged with flowers and shrubs. A contractor donated 10 tons of sand for a sandbox and had a redwood playhouse built. She called her creation "The Garden of Friendship for Little Folks." And they love it.

Now each day Ella Rigney spends a few hours with mothers watching little children play in her garden.

A small accomplishment, you may say. But imagine what would happen in our cities if one person on each block would dedicate serious efforts to improving the way people lived.

Is there a problem in your neighborhood waiting for a solution? All it might take is somebody like you.

"Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart." (Gal. 6:9)

Lord, turn our complaints about what needs to be done into a resolve to fill the needs that we find.

The Attraction of Cults

November 15

How do you explain the attraction of the "Moonies," Scientology, the ill-fated People's Temple in Guyana and similar groups?

The Rev. Steven Shoemaker, chaplain at North Carolina State University, believes such cults have seductive power because they release the individual from personal responsibility for his or her actions.

Rev. Shoemaker also believes churches "should offer more alternatives to young people which also call for commitment, concern and high standards."

In addition he thinks "parents should help children develop an adequate self-concept that is strong enough to resist charismatic leaders who might lead them to the edge . . ."

Do you listen to your children—really listen? Do you help them see that there is in their own religious tradition a call for excellence and a demand to be at the service of the poor and exploited?

"If you love to listen you will gain knowledge, and if you incline your ear you will become wise." (Sir. 6:33)

Remind us, Lord, to challenge our children—and ourselves—to aim higher and do more with Your assistance.

Babies by the Hundreds

November 16

In the past quarter century, Ruthelma and Donald Hallam have cared for 218 foster children.

"They say after the 100th baby, you get used to it," says the Los Angeles mother of three, who also has two adopted children. "Well, I got news for you, you don't. A little piece of my heart goes with each one."

Foster babies usually stay with the Hallams from three to 13 months, until adoptive parents can be found. Their infants have been white, black, brown, healthy and unhealthy.

"We have asked for problem cases," said Mrs. Hallam, whose husband is a school custodian. "They need love just that much more," she explains.

The Hallum house is built for comfort, and has been added to three times to accommodate the children they have taken in.

Why do they do it? "We just can't stand an empty house."

Who can tell how many children's lives have been made richer by parents such as these who know how to share the love in their hearts? God's gift of love increases to the extent that it is given away. How giving are you?

**"See what love the Father has given us,
that we should be called children of God."
(1 John 3:1)**

*Make us more responsive, Jesus, to those
who are most vulnerable and stand in great-
est need of our loving care.*

Restaurant Is Based on Trust

November 17

Ron Thomas of Sanger, Tex., a town of 2,000 some 50 miles north of Dallas, opened a restaurant called "The Fatted Calf" a few years ago. There is no set charge for the meals he serves.

Thomas was an engineering student who became a doctor and then was ordained as an evangelical minister. His congregation meets in his home but he feels his mission is to feed people.

With 1,200 customers a week, business is good. The religious aspect is underplayed, consisting mainly of Gospel songs strummed by a guitar-playing group. A large money jar is available for customers to pay whatever they think the meal is worth—or not to pay.

With volunteers as waitresses, "The Fatted Calf" just about breaks even. That doesn't bother Dr. Thomas.

"We believe God will take a liking to us," he said, "and pick up the tab."

Some people might say this is no way to run a business. But it could be a good way to live a life.

**"Trust in the Lord and keep at your toil."
(Sir. 11:21)**

*Increase our confidence in You, Father, so
we may extend trust to our friends and
neighbors.*

Odd Remedy for Wordiness

November 18

Back in 1596, an English chancellor decided to make an example of a lawyer who had submitted to the court a particularly wordy document.

He ordered that a hole be cut in the center of the 120-page document. Then he directed that the lawyer who wrote it have his head stuffed through the hole.

With this odd-looking garland around his neck, the author of the long-winded document was led through the corridors of Westminster Hall as a warning to other lawyers to be more concise.

Still, simple and direct writing doesn't seem to have caught on.

The first rule in writing is: know what you want to say. Don't pick a four-syllable word when a shorter one will do. Keep the main lines of your thought in view. Avoid side-issues and needless repetitions. Think of your audience.

Obscure language can cost people time, money and patience. Use the brain God gave you to become a better communicator—in prayer as well as in other aspects of your life.

“Be ready to listen to every narrative.” (Sir. 6:35)

*Let what we speak be plain and direct,
Lord, so we can contribute to understanding.*

Fearless Thief Finally Caught

November 19

A part-time art teacher, who had walked off with \$180,000 worth of valuables from museums, was finally nailed by London police when he was spotted taking \$13 worth of detergent and floor polish from a store.

Among the objects stolen by Richard Jeakings from galleries were etchings by Durer, Whistler and Sutherland; a watercolor by Blake; a print by Picasso; and several precious Minton porcelain vases.

"I just walk in and take them," Jeakings explained to police." He claimed that he even stole in full view of guards and would casually ride away on a bicycle.

"When did you last stop a man on a bike to see if he was carrying any stolen goods?" he asked.

If more of us had this sort of "cheekiness" for doing good the world would surely be a better place. Sometimes we are just afraid of taking a risk no matter how small. At other times the fear of ridicule or failure keeps us from speaking or acting for what we believe in.

Love can rid us of such fears—and God offers it to us continually.

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18)

Jesus, don't let timidity prevent us from doing the right thing.

Meet Sandy Allen, Optimist

November 20

Life can sometimes be difficult when you are the world's tallest woman. You can take that on the word of Sandy Allen, who is seven feet, seven inches tall.

Miss Allen, 25, was raised in Shelbyville, Ind., by her grandmother, who did not have the money for the medical treatment that would have ended the unusual growth. In addition, once the condition was diagnosed, it took a long while for Miss Allen to overcome her fears of an operation.

To support herself, she occasionally worked at exhibitions. Every hour she would greet audiences by saying, "Hello. I'm Sandy Allen, the world's tallest woman." She found this hard to do every day.

But Miss Allen's optimism eventually reasserted itself: "I'm glad for the chance to talk with people . . . I'm tall, and I'm trying to turn it into something good."

A moment's thought about the problems and even heartache involved in being so physically different from most people could make us more understanding.

But being different isn't necessarily bad. Like this young woman, we can turn it into "something good." To accept what we are and what we have is the beginning of wisdom. To ask God's help so we use our qualities constructively is the next step after that.

"She has done what she could." (Mark 14:8)

Jesus, lead us to become more accepting of people's differences, as You were in Your lifetime.

Cholera Blamed on Bottle Feeding

November 21

Have multi-national companies been too aggressive in introducing bottle feeding for infants in the Third World?

An outbreak of cholera in Bahrain, an oil-rich state in the Middle East, indicates this may be the case. More than ten percent of the 750 victims were less than a year old. Cholera is regarded as an adult illness.

Two experts of the World Health Organization compared 42 infants who contracted cholera with an equal number who didn't. The major difference was that the sick babies had been raised on infant formula, which must be mixed with water. The healthy babies had been breast-fed.

They concluded that the healthy babies had received some immunization in their mothers' milk and were less likely to drink contaminated water.

Critics of companies which have heavily promoted the use of bottle feeding in poor countries point out that the possibility of contamination is significantly greater than in industrialized countries where it has been used safely.

An incident such as that in Bahrain reminds us that our well intended actions frequently have consequences that no one anticipated. We should develop a willingness to review new programs on a personal as well as a governmental level.

"I will restore health to you . . . says the Lord." (Jer. 30:17)

Holy Spirit, help us to look beyond the obvious in considering the consequences of our actions.

In Retirement, She's a Busy Woman

November 22

There's something enjoyable about going through the mail each day at The Christophers. Invariably you come across something that gives you a tremendous lift. Recently, for instance, we received a letter from a 78-year-old retired nurse in Norwich, N. Y. She wrote to ask for one of our News Notes and to say how much she enjoys the Christopher Closeup television program.

Then she confided, "Nursing brought me close to human beings . . . During training we were taught to put ourselves in our patient's place. That teaching always stayed with me

"I do not do nursing now but I like music and occasionally play the piano at the hospital and the nursing home for the elderly . . . It is good therapy for me and I feel I am doing something for others . . .

"I have been able to keep a totally blind person from being moved to another home and away from her friends and relatives . . . We badly need more nursing homes and middle homes where an elderly person who is mentally up to par but unable to cook or live alone can be taken care of."

Here is a woman who is not only leading a full life at the age of 78 but whose chief concern is the welfare of others. Try to find some time this week to help an aged stranger, friend or relative.

"Wisdom is with the aged." (Job 12:12)

Jesus, show me how to express my appreciation to those who fashioned the society I now enjoy.

Desert Trek Beats Reform School

November 23

Strange as it sounds, a 2,500-mile trek by covered wagon from Tucson to Denver and back provides a successful alternative to reform school for delinquent teenagers.

This offbeat program, called VisionQuest, was started six years ago by Bob Burton, a Tucson corrections official who used to be a linebacker in pro football. "Our kids are the toughest there are," he says.

A typical journey took 67 youngsters through everything from 110-degree temperatures in the Arizona desert to blizzards in the Colorado Rockies.

Before the gruelling trek, the youngsters spend at least a year in small-group homes where they participate in remedial education, take part in sports and take two 15-day wilderness survival trips. The lucky ones take the wagon-train trip.

One result of enduring such hardships is a feeling of self-worth. Half the youngsters in VisionQuest haven't gotten into trouble again—a remarkable claim.

Self-worth is basic to any happy life. Do you have it? Do you impart it? Do you ask God for this gift?

"I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13)

Holy Spirit, help me to develop a good opinion of myself and to bolster those who are uncertain of their self-worth.

Children Need Housing Too

November 24

There's nothing quite so destructive of family life as the refusal to rent to tenants with children—or tenants who might have children, such as young married couples.

Imagine the frustration felt by those who have difficulty finding a place to live because home-owners don't want to rent to newly married couples. One such owner told a young couple that "children overhead would bring on migraines" and so he would not rent to them.

In St. Louis, a Committee for Freedom of Residence has been organized and is fighting the eviction of tenants with children. The committee director, Robert R. Knickmeyer, says the complaints are such "we're beginning to wonder whether managers of large real estate companies were ever children."

Laws outlawing discrimination against tenants with children have been adopted in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Arizona. The adoption of such ordinances (which obviously should provide adequate protection for home-owners) seems like a particularly appropriate way of showing our concern for future generations.

"Let the children come to Me." (Mark 10:14)

Father, strengthen our desire to protect the rights of children and families.

Civil Rights for the Handicapped

November 25

Handicapped persons are pressing hard for their civil rights, as other groups have done.

In Cincinnati, workers in a sheltered workshop voted to join a union—the first ever.

Groups representing the disabled are promoting legislation that would raise salaries at special workshops for the handicapped to at least the minimum wage.

Other groups are suing a large wheelchair manufacturer, charging it with monopolistic practices.

Organizations of the blind successfully opposed airlines that tried to limit the number of blind persons on any trip and to restrict the use of their white canes in flight.

"The blind are doing this, not do-gooders for the blind," said James Gashel, head of the National Federation of the Blind. "That's the important thing."

As people do more things for themselves, they step on more toes. Some of those toes may be yours and mine. But thank God more people are standing up for their rights and making their voices heard.

**"For everything there is a season . . . a time to keep silence and a time to speak."
(Ecc. 3:1-7)**

Make us sensitive, Lord, of the need we all have to do things for ourselves.

Athlete Learned to Say Thanks

November 26

During the 1974 baseball season, Philadelphia Phillies outfielder Greg Luzinski tore the ligament that covers the kneecap when he crashed against a wall chasing a fly ball. It appeared that his career was over.

After surgery, long months of recuperation ensued, followed by agonizing exercises to regain the lost strength in his knee.

One sleepless night, Greg Luzinski prayed: "God, I know I've taken too much for granted . . . I guess I was thankful, but not thankful enough . . . Give me the patience and strength I'll need to get back in the game. I know now I can't do it alone."

By slow degrees Greg Luzinski's prayer was answered. In gratitude, he purchased a block of box seats to be used at each home game by underprivileged and handicapped youngsters. In response, they lettered a crude sign that says: "Thanks, Greg."

When we are thankful to God, people often have reason to be thankful to us. Our lives change for the better. And that has a hopeful and healing effect on many others.

**"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,
for His mercy endures forever." (Dan. 3:67)**

*Teach us how to say thanks, Father, by
what we do as much as by what we say.*

Our Forgotten Minority

November 27

When the Pilgrims arrived in America, they were met by some of the Indians who populated the entire land, east as well as west. Today there are only 44,400 Indians in North Carolina, the one eastern state among the top five states in the country in terms of Indian population.

Not only are the Indians much less visible today, American citizens are generally ignorant about the survivors of those people who inhabited America long before the Pilgrims arrived.

Probably few of us are aware that our population includes 792,000 Indians, that economically they are the most deprived group in the country, that more than half of them live in urban areas, that only a third of them live on reservations, that the unemployment rate among their young people is 35 percent.

Historically, our relations with the Indians have been governed by treaties—agreements entered into as between one nation and another. More than 400 such treaties were officially ratified by our government. Most of them were broken in one fashion or another.

You and I may never come in contact with an Indian. But to respond to their needs—some of which come from exploitation and imposed cultural deprivation—our national policies have to stem from a citizenry concerned with justice.

“Give justice to the weak and the fatherless.” (Ps. 82:3)

Open my eyes, Holy Spirit, that I may recognize my failings and overcome them.

New Hope After Mastectomy

November 28

The surgical removal of a breast due to cancer has a traumatic effect on many women. At times surgery leads to depression, drinking, broken relationships and thoughts of suicide.

Thanks to new procedures and cooperation between cancer and plastic surgeons, it is now possible in many cases to have the breast restored, even years after the initial surgery.

Because of the beneficial psychological effects, the reconstructive operation is not considered to be vain or frivolous by doctors. It is also safe, they say. And such operations are now covered by many medical insurance plans.

"I'm still here 8½ years after my mastectomy," said one woman. But I tell you, that if I only had six months to live, I would still have my breast reconstructed. It's that important to me."

A non-profit group named Ask a Friend to Explain Restoration (AFTER) has been formed to provide information and emotional support.

The Bible contains this blessing from God: "blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that couches beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your Father are mighty beyond the blessings of the eternal mountains." (Gen. 49:25-26) His blessings are not to be lightly regarded.

"The Lord has blessed His people." (2 Ch. 31:10)

Lord, provide us a sound appreciation of our bodies as temples of Your Holy Spirit.

Creative Problem-Solving

November 29

Just as your body learns to do sit-ups every day, so your brain can learn to solve problems creatively, says Princeton psychologist Eugene Raudsepp.

Raudsepp, director of Princeton Creative Research, Inc., directs seminars for business firms on developing creativity. He believes that anyone using his mind-building exercises can improve his idea-generating ability up to 300 percent in a few hours. These are the psychologist's basic principles:

- Think of as many alternatives as possible.
- Look at a problem in different ways.
- "Piggyback" your ideas, building one on another.
- Don't be discouraged by stress or failures.

"When you have a few ideas, you may be lucky to have a good one," says Raudsepp. "When you have many ideas, you're apt to have a great one."

Creativity isn't a sometime thing. And it isn't just a matter of inspiration. It is something that needs openness and awareness. Creativity is a way of life.

"Be transformed by the renewal of your mind." (Rom. 12:2)

Open my mind to look at problems in new ways, Lord.

Making Baskets a Fruitful Business

November 30

John Federowicz runs the only wood-fired, steam-driven business left in New Jersey. His Califon Basket Co. is the country's only manufacturer of all-wood peach baskets.

"It's a marginal, break-even operation," says Federowicz, who employs eight workers and sells 400,000 baskets a year. "You'll never become a millionaire in this business, but there is more to success than making money."

Although plastic-bottomed baskets and cardboard boxes are cheaper, Federowicz insists that the wooden basket is still best for displaying the fruit.

"The cone shape distributes the weight of the fruit so the pieces on the bottom are less likely to get crushed," he explains. "And when fruit does break, the wood absorbs the juices. It doesn't dry out on the surface and attract flies."

The old ways aren't always the best ways or the most economical ways. But as Federowicz reminds us, there is more to life than making money.

And sometimes there are good reasons for the traditional way of doing things. What we want to do is strike a balance between economy on one hand and efficiency and quality on the other.

"In everything a prudent man acts with knowledge." (Prov. 13:16)

Keep us mindful of both old values and the merit of new developments, Holy Spirit.

Ham Operators Light a Candle

December 1

When a ham radio operator heard about a 10-year-old boy in Ecuador who had a tumor that surgeons there could not remove, he contacted another operator, Dr. Gerald Blankfort, who launched a fund drive to bring the boy to the States for treatment.

Donations poured in from other hams, from the Spanish-speaking community in Los Angeles and the UCLA Alumni Association.

After the tumor was removed, the boy, Paulino Freire, placed a medallion around Dr. Blankfort's neck and said: "Vaya con Dios. Gracias, señor, gracias."

Dr. Blankfort, in turn, presented Paulino with a small ham radio kit and instruction booklet so "one day he may be instrumental in doing a service for someone else in need."

One good deed deserves another. What you do, in God's Providence, can make a difference. It can light a candle that another can use to spread the light even further.

**"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to Your Father who is in heaven."
(Mt. 5:16)**

Let the warmth of your love, Father, kindle a light in us that will continue all our days.

Bringing Change to the World

December 2

John J. Roth, a teacher from Sterling Heights, Mich., found a way to bring international relations down to the personal level for his high school students.

Explaining why he and one of his students, Marybeth Aragona, went to Belize (British Honduras) one summer, he said in a letter to The Christophers:

"I felt hypocritical in only talking about the world's problems and not actually doing anything about them. I realized, through the help of The Christophers, that change for a better world began with me."

In his international relations course he stressed world hunger, focusing on Belize in particular. A few students suggested they form a club to deal with some of the problems that had been examined. The students raised more than \$1,000, and it was used to buy two five-horsepower roto-tillers for farmers in Belize.

A teacher like John Roth can really educate his students by challenging them to bring abstract ideas down to the personal level. It starts with the recognition of individual responsibility for overcoming the evils that beset the world. "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good," as St. Paul said (Rom. 12:21).

"Do not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary bless, for to this you have been called." (1 Pet. 3:9)

Holy Spirit, keep teachers aware of their many opportunities to motivate students.

Everybody's Got a Rich Uncle

December 3

At times we've all yearned for a rich uncle. Actually, we have one in Uncle Sam, who makes all kinds of supplies available to those who know where to look for a bargain.

In 1978, some \$2.7 billion in government "surplus property" was made available at drastically reduced prices. About \$483 million of it was donated to various public and non-profit organizations. The rest was sold. For example:

- A town in Louisiana purchased a 31-foot Coast Guard cruiser for \$2,500 and converted it into a fireboat.

- Nevada residents rebuilt a washed-out bridge with surplus materials costing \$3,000.

- School children in Oklahoma are kept dry under bus shelters made from aircraft nose cones that originally cost \$11,000.

Of course, it's your money that paid for these materials to begin with. But it's good to realize that government officials do make an effort to economize, searching for a return even on limited-use items such as nose cones on the one hand and devising ingenious ways of utilizing surplus on the other.

It's popular to complain about the wastefulness of government at times but there are many who "gather up the fragments" (John 6:12) in the interest of conserving tax funds—your dollars.

**"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal."
(Mt. 6:20)**

Keep us primed for opportunities, Lord, to serve the public interest.

Fifth Grader Faces Cancer

December 4

Beth Ryan, 10 years old, wrote an article for her fifth grade classmates on the cancer operation and chemotherapy she had undergone.

"When my parents told me I had cancer," she wrote, "I was scared. 'Why does it have to happen to me?' I thought, and I was angry. How I wished I could talk to someone . . .

"I watched other children doing all the things I used to take for granted. I felt jealous . . .

"Whenever I'm in the hospital alone, I just cry and think that my roommate will hear me and think I'm a crybaby . . .

"Now, I think, above all, I wrote this to make myself proud that I had come a long way. I have come from not being able to say that word 'cancer' and being afraid that people would notice my bald head and laugh and being afraid that people would see tears come to my eyes when I was sad."

Pray for the clearness of vision to confront things as they are.

"Be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Josh. 1:9)

*Lord, give us the confidence to trust that
You won't let us be overwhelmed by what-
ever the future holds in store.*

The Pain of Growing Up

December 5

Two items in a recent edition of the paper indicate that sometimes our young people have to grow up awfully fast.

Out in Boone, N. C., 11-year-old Crystal Lusk was riding in a school bus being driven by her father when her father suffered a heart attack and slumped into his seat with his foot on the gas pedal. Crystal noticed him, moved to the front, took her father's foot off the gas, steered the bus through an intersection and brought it to a stop at the curb.

In another incident, Willie Jenkins, 8, showed the same kind of cool-headed response. He spent a frightening night clinging to a boat cushion in Florida's Waccissa River while splashing the water to scare off circling alligators.

Willie and his grandfather were on a fishing excursion when their boat flipped over. His grandfather died as a result of the mishap. Willie, who doesn't swim, survived because he remembered what his grandfather had told him to do in case of an accident.

Not all young people are faced with these kinds of emergencies. But they do have to cope with such contemporary problems as drugs, eroticism and an ever increasing materialistic world. Sometimes society "deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers" (Job 39:16).

"Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Acts 2:21)

Jesus, help our young people over the difficulties they encounter growing up.

For Love of Money

December 6

Take George Fooshee's word for it when he says that two-thirds of Jesus' parables concern money in one way or another.

Fooshee, who runs a debt collection agency in Wichita, Kansas, has definite views on money.

"The Bible doesn't say that money is the root of all evil," he says. "It says the love of money is. When money or any other thing like that becomes your god, then it becomes evil."

He estimates that 80 percent of a person's time is spent earning money or spending it. And he thinks it's the cause of most of the misery in the world.

Like fire, money can warm you or burn you. It all depends on how wisely you use it.

What is your attitude towards money? Would you scuttle moral values to make a lot of it? Which do you put first when buying: necessities or pleasure? Do you save it when you can? How much do you donate to religious and charitable causes?

What you do with your money tells a great deal about the sort of person you are. This thought deserves more than passing reflection. It goes to the heart of the matter.

"Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation." (1 Tim. 6:9)

*Endow us with a sense of balance, Father,
so that we use money properly.*

Making TV Work for You

December 7

Deirdre Breslin of the New York State Department of Education has come up with some tips for “discriminating dialsmanship”—high-sounding term for helping children get more out of TV inasmuch as they’re going to watch it anyway.

Ms. Breslin, who is the education department’s supervisor of Urban School Services, advises:

- Watch your children’s favorite shows with them. See if they can learn to analyze the plot. This can help them begin to distinguish fantasy from reality.

- Get them to question the solutions to problems presented. Cartoons, for example, usually offer violent solutions in slapstick. These are unworkable in real life.

- Discuss with them the accuracy—or inaccuracy—of commercials.

- Don’t be afraid to forbid certain programs if you genuinely object to them. But let the youngsters know your reasons.

TV has been blamed for many problems. But it is with us and it’s only common sense to make the most of it. Parents are God’s principal agents of learning.

“Discipline your son and he will give you rest.” (Prov. 29:17)

Holy Spirit, never let us forget that children gain more from positive directions than from a string of “don’ts.”

Made in the Image of God

December 8

New York's Ninth Precinct is the toughest police district in a city of dangerous police assignments. Among its residents are many social outcasts—derelects, criminals, terrorists, addicts. In the last few years seven policemen have been killed in the district.

Under the circumstances it would be easy for policemen to give in to cynicism. But officer Dennis Harrington has too much respect for himself and for the inherent goodness of people to treat them with anything but respect.

Last year he made 111 arrests. If there's a delay in processing he'll frequently get them coffee or cigarettes. On occasion he has lent some of his prisoners money. "They pay back," he told a New York Times interviewer. "I haven't been stiffed yet."

He also tells of a time when he and his partner saved a man through mouth-to-mouth resuscitation during a pouring rainstorm. As they worked, somebody held an umbrella over them. It turned out to be a man Harrington had arrested just two weeks earlier.

We are all made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). If we can keep that in mind in dealing with others—especially those who are different from us—we'll go a long way toward overcoming prejudice and building peace among all men.

**"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you?"
(1 Cor. 3:16)**

Lord God, help me to see Your likeness in everybody I come in contact with, especially those who live on the fringes of society.

Dying Man Shows Others How to Live

December 9

Robert Fisher is one of those people who can teach us how to live each day as it comes.

"I used to be a very afraid person," the 51-year-old New Yorker revealed in a newspaper interview. "I was afraid of people, I was afraid of responsibility, afraid of completing a task, afraid of being successful, afraid of life. I was guilty when I was happy and guilty when I had something that someone didn't have."

Six years ago, the now-retired part owner in a steel business was told he had terminal leukemia. Instead of waiting for the end, he became a five-day-a-week volunteer at a hospital specializing in the care of people with cancer.

"I talk to patients about what my life has been . . ." he said. "I tell them I have a disease that's progressive and that I have a period I'm coming toward that will be the terminal part of my life, that I don't think it's too far off, and that it is a living experience."

A year ago Fisher made plans for a cross-country bicycle trip. "I want to dispel the notion that cancer is a constant problem," he explained, adding, "I may have good experiences and I may have bad experiences. But I don't think I'm a failure if I don't complete the trip. I think I'm a success because I try."

**"Though our outer nature is wasting away,
our inner nature is being renewed every
day." (2 Cor. 4:16)**

*Reinforce in us, Jesus, the conviction that
each day given to us is worth offering to
You.*

Library Books Returned

December 10

Millions of people forget to return library books every year. Librarians constantly seek new ways of coping with the problem. Here are two methods that have been successful.

A school in Chicago announced a raffle for a \$30 prize. Only students who had perfect lending records would be eligible. The announcement resulted in the return of 90 percent of all overdue books.

In a Canadian school, an electronic system involving stepped-up penalties was installed and that too was successful, cutting book losses about the same 90 percent.

Direct comparisons would be unfair because the schools are so different. However, the cost of one program was much less than the other. Only time will demonstrate if the raffle continues to be effective.

The Christopher philosophy is a positive one. That philosophy is summed up in the Christopher motto: "It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."

We are always interested in hearing examples of how this positive approach has worked in practice. If you know of any tell us about them. We might be able to share them with others.

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:21)

Give us a greater sense of the good people can do when challenged, Jesus.

She's Happy in Her Work

December 11

"I wouldn't do anything else." That's the way Karen Gifford, a physical therapist, described her job in an interview.

One of eight therapists working out of a Denver clinic, Mrs. Gifford helps rehabilitate the victims of strokes, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, arthritis and broken bones, visiting them in their own homes.

"My father is a doctor," she said. "I knew from the time I was in the seventh grade that I wanted to do something in the medical field." Because she didn't want to be a doctor or nurse, her father suggested that she consider the physical therapy field.

As part of a program called Homebound, Mrs. Gifford trains patients to live their lives with more ease and independence after being discharged from the hospital. She works with the whole family, stressing positive tendencies and actions.

Mrs. Gifford visits about 14 persons each week, making seven or eight calls a day.

"I'm convinced I made the right choice for me both in personal satisfaction and in opportunity," Mrs. Gifford told an interviewer.

How many of us feel that way about our jobs? Part of the satisfaction lies in putting our hearts into something that benefits others. That's a desire God has instilled in each of us.

"I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame." (Job 29:15)

Jesus, assist us to find ways of serving You in our daily lives.

Helping Marriage Work

December 12

It is a commonplace to say that the family is the bedrock of society. The trouble is, our laws and our institutions don't always reflect that conviction. For instance, we spend more money to care for the victims of broken and hurting families than we do to heal families or keep them together.

However, opposite trends are developing. For instance, proposals are surfacing in various state legislatures to increase marriage license fees and use the additional money to provide family counseling.

Also being proposed are mandatory pre-divorce counseling programs.

Some of the proposals are of questionable merit. In other cases the reality is that, for couples who have reached the point of going to court, counseling comes too late.

Still, in some instances, at least, there is a chance the relationship can be healed. Is it worth the time and money? You decide. Meanwhile, why not take the time to tell your spouse, "I love you." And mean it.

God is the Author of marriage. And no author likes to see his handiwork damaged. Good marriages demand real effort.

"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor. 13:7)

Give us the foresight, Jesus, to keep feeding the flame of love so it won't burn low or go out.

Passport to Life

December 13

What is it like to be illiterate?

Norman Cousins, chairman of the board of the Saturday Review, says that such a person becomes vulnerable and exploitable, doomed to live a life without options.

"It is the wasting," he says, "of thousands of tons of valuable rice seed because rice growers are unable to apply the 34-kilograms-per-hectare formula. It is juvenile delinquency.

"It is a baby near death because the mother cannot find anyone to read the forgotten instructions the doctor affixed to a vial of medicine."

In the U.S., half the nation's unemployed youth between 16 and 21 are functionally illiterate—they cannot read simple instructions, bus signs or fill out employment forms. More than half the inmates in prison cannot read.

Despite major efforts since 1950, the actual number of illiterate persons in the world has grown from 700 million to 810 million.

Where can you offer your services to teach one person to read and write? It can be a passport to life.

"Receive instruction in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity." (Prov. 1:3)

Teach us the value of wisdom, Father, and give us the desire and skill to help others along the way.

Science and Religion in Dialogue

December 14

Do science and religion mix? A 12-day conference in which 350 scientists and theologians participated indicated that faith and science have much to discuss. The meeting was sponsored by the World Conference of Churches and was held at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge.

"We see where we can work together," said Metropolitan Paulos Gregorios of India, an Eastern Orthodox prelate, in summing up the meeting.

The sharpest debate took place on the future of nuclear energy. The conference rejected a call for an indefinite ban on nuclear plant construction. But, by a vote of 129 to 45, it did adopt a call for a five-year moratorium to see if some of the problems surrounding the use of nuclear energy can be solved.

The group denounced "the use of science and technology by industrialized and technically advanced societies to serve military and economic interests which have brought great suffering to people of the Third World."

In the continuing discussion between religion and science, religious thinkers have to avoid simplistic approaches to moral problems that make science the villain causing the world's evils. And scientists must ask themselves whether the goals set by government or industry meet the real needs of the world's peoples.

"Live in harmony with one another." (Rom. 12:16)

Open your hearts to receive the insights of every field of study, Father, and let us work together in harmony.

Quality of Life for the Dying

December 15

In the Middle Ages, a hospice was a place of humane care for persons dying of cancer—and for their families.

The modern hospice movement started in 1975 in New Haven, Conn. Today there are 75 hospices around the country. Many more are planned.

In hospitals, cancer patients are heavily sedated, attached to tubes, isolated from relatives and at times shunned by medical personnel.

In a hospice, dying persons are made as comfortable as possible. Medication and pain-killers are kept to a minimum. Trained counselors help the dying face death. They also assist families, often bringing peace by healing strained or broken relationships.

The average length of a patient's stay in a hospice is 76 days. It costs about \$1,000, compared with nearly \$300 a day in the average hospital. "We extend the quality of life," says Lynn Hadlock of the Orlando, Fla., hospice, "when we can't extend the quantity."

By restoring the humane, personal element to dying, hospice takes some of the horror out of death.

"Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15:54)

*Give us the grace, Lord, to face dying as
You ask—confident and trusting in You.*

Ruby: A Diamond in the Classroom

December 16

It's been said that every school has a Ruby Collins, but to the children in San Francisco's Guadalupe Elementary School, Ruby Collins is something special.

For one thing, she still likes jumping rope and Dr. Seuss, just as they do, even though she's been teaching for 26 years.

For another, she has good lungs. "You can hear Ruby down the block," comments a friend awed by Ruby's ability to command the attention of frisky children.

Most important, Ruby Collins is a teacher who blends tenderness with discipline.

"Whenever I have a child who can't adjust, I take this youngster to Ruby," says Marjorie Manko, the principal. "The change is unbelievable."

Ms. Collins has a clear philosophy: "If you expect certain things from children, they'll meet them—whether they're in kindergarten or in the fifth grade."

Ruby Collins gives love. She's also an accomplished teacher. It's a winning combination.

Good teachers need support from the administration and from parents. Education doesn't just happen. It's a combination of efforts from all who care about the learning process.

"The wise man also may hear and increase in learning." (Prov. 1:5)

Holy Spirit, inspire parents to become more active in supporting their schools and the teachers who are molding the future there.

Snow-Making in the Arctic

December 17

The last place you'd expect to have a shortage of snow is Alaska. Not so. And because of this a construction company installed a snow-making machine in that state's North Slope area.

It doesn't snow much that far north, and the delicate surface of the tundra is easily damaged by the hauling of drilling equipment by firms seeking oil.

So the Arctic Slope-Alaska General Construction Co. used its snow machine to make highways by putting down a layer of snow and ice on the frozen tundra. With a layer of gravel on top, the result was a first-class highway that supports the heaviest of loads and doesn't damage the tundra.

A lot of local residents and environmental groups put up strong resistance to the oil industry's early plans for drilling on the North Slope. Now the companies admit that the slowdown did much to protect Alaska's natural resources.

God's good earth and ours requires careful handling if future generations are to have a world worth living in.

**"My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens."
(Is. 48:13)**

*Keep us from being wasteful of the resources
You have put at our disposal, Lord.*

Blind Enjoy Museum Visit

December 18

A Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibit of shapes and forms gave blind mentally retarded New Yorkers a chance to feel works of art.

Visitors from 18 to 33 years of age went with the staff of the Jewish Guild for the Blind to "see" with their hands the exhibit of 40 objects—sculpture, textiles, a pewter lamp, antique dishes. Then the group worked with modelling clay, making forms of their own.

In the special program, guards were told to be liberal in letting the handicapped touch art objects, to gain a clearer image of the museum.

Sightlessness is a severe handicap. At the same time, without vision, which those who have it consider essential, blind persons accomplish tasks that astonish us.

Be open to opportunities to enhance the lives of those who have physical disabilities. Handicaps are not chosen—they happen. And they could happen to us. We can show thanks for what we have by being aware of others' needs.

"None of us lives to himself and none of us dies to himself." (Rom. 14:7)

Lord, help me to lighten the load of persons in need.

Some Thoughts About Crime

December 19

In a speech he gave at the University of Denver, Prof. David H. Bayley of the university's graduate school of international studies knocked the stuffing out of some commonly accepted ideas about crime.

For one thing, he noted that the United States has the toughest criminal penalties of all the world's developed nations. It also has the highest crime rate. If that's true, then the notion of punishment as a deterrent has lost whatever validity it might have had.

He attributes the high crime rate in this country in part to what he calls our "shared unwillingness" (a) to speak out on moral issues and (b) to help police ourselves.

Whether he's right or not is a question for sociologists to determine. But it is true that we don't take the responsibility of policing ourselves. The notion that one shouldn't "turn in" another person is widely accepted, for instance.

With Ezekiel we can lament that "the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence" (Ezek. 7:23). But not much is likely to happen until we come to a realization of our own responsibility for first, eliminating the injustices that lead to crime; second, establishing high ethical standards, and third, developing workable rehabilitation programs.

"The Lord . . . has compassion on those who accept His discipline and who are eager for His judgments." (Sir. 18:14)

Father, make me more aware of my social responsibilities.

A Star That's Coming and Going

December 20

What do you make of a star that seems to be hurtling at speeds of up to 115 million m.p.h.—in opposite directions? It has the experts baffled, too.

The object was discovered by Bruce Margon of UCLA. "It's like nothing else we've ever seen," says the astronomer. "Nothing else even comes close."

Another astronomer describes it as "the most amazing thing that has been discovered in some time." Still another confesses, "I don't know what to make of it."

Dr. Margon theorizes that it is "some kind of star that's in some terribly weird kind of trouble," throwing off gases in different directions like a lawn sprinkler. It is located in our milky way—trillions of miles away.

The human mind may be compared with an isle of curiosity surrounded by a sea of question marks. There is so much we really don't know about the universe, about ourselves.

What we do know, by the gift of faith, is that there is a God, and that He loves us, personally and individually. That leaves plenty of questions, but gives us one solid answer.

Recall the Psalmist's words that God set "the moon and stars to rule over the night, for His steadfast love endures for ever." (Ps. 136:9)

**"I have loved you with an everlasting love."
(Jer. 31:3)**

Deepen our sense of awe at Your infinite power, Lord, and our trust in Your goodness.

Grandmother Helps Farmworkers

December 21

Mary Young, 74, is too busy and happy to retire. For the past nine years, she's been hauling household furniture and kitchen utensils to migrant farmworkers in Dade County, Fla., and she's not about to quit.

Mrs. Young, who has two daughters and 15 grandchildren, got started as a member of St. Monica's Women's Guild when she brought Christmas presents to the migrants. She says one of her greatest pleasures is the delight expressed by the laborers when she brings something they can use.

Back in 1970, most migrants lived in their trucks or in huts. Now many of them have better housing but they are still exploited often and have many personal needs they are unable to meet.

Mrs. Young's daughters would like her to slow down, but the former furniture and freight hauler observes: "I've never hurt myself doing the Lord's work."

Helping migrants and other neglected people is surely the Lord's work. It is our work too—that of individuals, churches, businesses and government. Our society ultimately will be judged by how well or badly we promoted the cause of the poor and forgotten.

"She opens her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy." (Prov. 31:20)

Holy Spirit, never let us turn away from those who suffer poverty and oppression.

Behind the Coffee Habit

December 22

If you think that it's just been in recent years that we've seen the organizational power of women—guess again. America is a nation of coffee drinkers because American women were disciplined enough to shun English tea in the days before the Revolution despite their liking for it.

Arthur D. Pierce tells the story in his little-known history, "Smugglers' Woods." Tea was the main pick-me-up in the colonies. Women drank an estimated two million cups of the brew a day, with 2,000 chests of tea being consumed annually in Pennsylvania alone.

England's Lord North was counting on the women to make his hated tea tax stick and he contrived to cut the price of tea in half—while retaining the tax—to make the English tea even more attractive. The Tea Act of 1773 made it possible for the East India Company to sell tea for even less than smugglers were able to do.

But instead of buying the English tea, the women of the colonies turned to other beverages and within a couple of years the coffee habit had taken root. It might take the same sort of national self-discipline and concentrated action to tame the energy crisis.

"For the moment all discipline seems painful." (Heb. 12:11)

Father, strengthen our national resolve to conserve our dwindling resources and find substitutes for them.

Contest Honors Homemakers

December 23

Recently the Edward L. Bernays Foundation of Babson Park, Mass., offered a \$3,000 prize for a 5,000-word composition that would outline a workable plan to give housewives a just compensation for their labors.

Mrs. Bernays explained the thought behind the unusual contest:

"I have always felt that housewives should be reimbursed for their work which consists of at least 35 different skills and professions. Since I couldn't come up with a solution, maybe somebody else could—so we decided to put it up to the country at large.

"Now, perhaps, we will be able to make a vacuum cleaner just as much of a tax exemption as a business machine."

While that goal hasn't been achieved, people generally are more aware of the problem. More and more articles devoted to it can be found in the media and that's a sign of increased recognition for housework.

To make a "home" out of a "house" is a creative activity. It requires a warmth, a human touch that transforms everyday realities through love. The world was created by Him who loved enough to give us His Son. When that force is put to work in the home it can overcome all sorts of problems.

"She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness." (Prov. 31:27)

Jesus, provide us with the insight to value the activity of those who truly make a house a home.

Information for the Asking

December 24

The late Bishop James A. McNulty of Buffalo used to say, "He who doesn't bloweth his own horn will find it remaineth untooted."

That doesn't mean that the bishop was a blowhard—in truth he was a very humble person. But he was a firm believer in communications and his comment sprang to mind when Georgetown University's booklet "Press Contacts" came into the office.

It provides the name, phone number and area of expertise of some 525 of the university's 1,600 faculty members. These are people willing to talk to media personnel about a variety of subjects—more than 250 in all—ranging from abortion, adolescence and affirmative action to warfare, wills and women's issues.

That's a great idea, putting all sorts of information at the immediate disposal of the public through print and electronic journalists. One of our staff people, a former newsman, who spent years building up special sources, said he wished something like it had been available when he was covering everything from the law to religion to medicine.

If you have a special area of competence, give some thought to ways you can share it with others.

"As each has received a gift, employ it for one another." (1 Pet. 4:10)

Holy Spirit, help us to appreciate the service given by those who bring us the news each day.

Christmas: Not Just for Children

December 25

You can hear the thought expressed almost everywhere: Christmas is a wonderful time for children.

It is that. But the remark sometimes masks the fact that we have confused peripheral elements of the celebration with its essentials. We confuse giving gifts with loving, children with the Child whose feast we celebrate.

For many children, Christmas is the climax of a little-understood holiday in which the Christ Child and Santa, the tree and the crib, the gifts and the Magi merge in a fantasy-land of tinsel and glitter.

When that theme dominates it blots out the message of the angels: "Do not be afraid . . . a Savior has been born to you."

That message of hope, of the promise of salvation, was conveyed first to shepherds, simple field hands tending their flocks in pasture land outside of Bethlehem.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, not to redeem us by His birth but by His death and resurrection. His birth was the sign that redemption was near.

"He who is mighty has done great things for me." (Luke 1:49)

Father, sustain us through our hope in Jesus.

Christmas Was His Hobby

December 26

Before his death, Tony Gruttadauria, a retired novelty salesman, spent his spare time collecting and wrapping Christmas presents.

Each year at Christmastime, Gruttadauria, 64, would dress up as Santa Claus and distribute the gifts he bought at flea markets and garage sales to the needy children in central Florida.

"He was always broke because he was always spending his money on toys," said Don Rothy, a friend.

"You should have seen his apartment. It was packed. He didn't have much furniture. A bed, a cot, a TV that didn't work properly, a radio and a few other things. And the rest of the apartment was just packed full of Christmas things."

"He just loved kids," said Mr. Rothy. "He just enjoyed making kids happy. This became his hobby 365 days a year."

Tony Gruttadauria was a giver—of money, of time, of love, of himself. In this way, he imitated the most generous One of all.

**"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."
(John 3:16)**

Father, may Your spirit of generosity inspire us to give to others.

The Miracle Workers

December 27

Not only does God still work miracles, He does it every day, using human agents.

Think not? Well maybe it depends on your idea of a miracle. There are supernatural miracles and natural miracles. Some of the things surgeons are able to do are bonafide miracles, even though there might be a natural explanation for the wonders they perform.

As an example, think of the 15-hour operation in which a 10-member surgical team at New York's Bellevue Hospital reattached Renee Katz's hand to her arm after it had been severed at the wrist. The talented 17-year-old musician had been injured when she was pushed in front of a train for no known reason.

This wasn't the first time the team had worked such a "miracle." A week before they had restored one leg of a police officer who had lost both legs in a car accident.

Perhaps it is because wonders such as these are becoming almost commonplace that we no longer marvel at them. A surgeon just like you and me, is made in the image and likeness of God and his skill, like all skills, comes from God.

In a sense, all of us are capable of miracles—miracles of love and dedication and generosity, including miracles of birth and life in which we cooperate directly with the Creator. To appreciate all this we have to renew our sense of wonder.

"To one is given through the Spirit . . . the working of miracles." (1 Cor. 12:8-10)

Holy Spirit, help me to come to an understanding of my own participation in the wonders of creation.

Shipwrecked Family Rescued

December 28

Elmo Wortman, 53, and his son and two teenage daughters survived for a month in sub-freezing temperatures along the southeast coast of Alaska before a Coast Guard helicopter rescued them.

Their 33-foot sailboat had run aground and broke up off Dall Island in a winter storm. They lost their boots, but salvaged a few apples, onions and a can of breakfast drink. The family constructed a raft of foam and wood flotsam on which they floated 25 miles to another island, where Wortman and his son looked for a cabin after building a shelter for the girls.

They found a cabin stocked with food, but its radio did not work. They left a note which was found by the cabin owner who then contacted the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard rescued all four.

What keeps people going when there appears to be no hope? Paradoxically, it is hope itself, a determination to survive, the expectation that things will get better.

The storms that surround us are usually of a different kind. But we need hope nonetheless. If it is powered by the will to live and grounded in a confidence that God is good, then it is possible to survive the worst of predicaments.

"I now bid you take heart." (Acts 27:22)

Father, give us the hidden strength to keep on even when there seems to be no way out.

Gambling Is a Poor Social Bet

December 29

Because of the apparent success of casinos in Atlantic City, gambling fever is spreading. Other states are look-oceanward enviously, thinking that perhaps gambling revenue holds the key to social problems.

Simply put, it doesn't.

In its first year, gambling created more than 3,000 new jobs in Atlantic City. But only a thousand of those jobs went to the people of Atlantic City.

In addition, street crime increased 25 percent. Property zoomed in "value" and the rents charged to older people, blue-collar workers and the poor zoomed as well.

State revenues from casino operation were to benefit senior citizens, but Mayor Joseph Lazarow told Parade magazine, "I don't know how we ever figure gambling would help our senior citizens. So far, it's done more to harm our people than help them."

Gambling receipts seem like a painless way of meeting obligations. In reality, gambling operations divert attention from the problems underlying poverty; they create the illusion that results are being achieved. Glitter is no substitute for justice.

"In the place of righteousness . . . there was wickedness." (Eccl. 3:16)

Lord, do not let us be diverted from our social obligations by the lure of easy solutions.

Questions for Unwelcome Guests

December 30

Are you the sort of person who never gets invited a second time as a weekend guest? You just might be if you answer "yes" to some of the following questions:

- Do you ask your hosts "What can I do to help?" and then make yourself scarce when they tell you?
- Do you borrow books, take them home—and never return them?
- Do you forget to pay for long-distance phone calls?
- Do you follow your hosts around like a puppy-dog looking for something to do?
- Do you give their children candy when they're trying to encourage them to eat fresh fruit?
- Do you stay on an extra day beyond the time you were expected to leave? If so, don't count on another invitation.

The Golden Rule is golden because it adds precious value to the stuff of human relationships. While it has a divine sanction, "Do unto others . . ." really springs from the depths of human nature.

In big matters or small, you show yourself a better human being if you act with tact and consideration.

"Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." (Mt. 7:12)

As we grow older, Lord, let us grow more sensitive to the feelings and needs of others.

Drinking and driving don't mix very well and that's an established fact. Nearly half of the automobile fatalities in the U.S. are alcohol related.

When youth is added to the picture the potential for catastrophe is even greater. For instance, accidents involving teenagers increased by 132 percent when New Hampshire lowered the legal drinking age to 18.

New Hampshire has since rectified what the chairman of its Traffic Safety Commission calls "a tragic mistake." So have several other states. Here are some additional life-saving suggestions.

- Don't serve liquor to young visitors in your home or permit its consumption there.
- Talk to your own children about the dangers of drinking and driving.
- Advise your sons and daughters against riding with friends who have been drinking.
- Let other parents and school officials know what you are doing, and seek their cooperation.
- Follow your own advice.

"I appeal to you . . . bear with my word of exhortation." (Heb. 13:22)

Father, protect our young people and give them the courage to act with intelligence.



About The Christophers



Our message is based on the Judeo-Christian concept of service to God and all humanity. We use the printed word, television and radio to spread the idea that each individual is unique and has the ability to transform society.

Father James Keller, our founder, said the ultimate aim of the Christopher Movement is "to encourage the followers of Christ to integrate His love and truth into the vital fields of influence that have gradually gone pagan because they have been largely abandoned to those who do not know Him."

We believe

- That the human race and world need what you have
- That prayer is the most effective response to the problems of society.
- That we are called by God to become personally involved in the solutions to the problems that confront us: each of us has a job to do that can be done by no other.



St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans (12:21), said: "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." To motivate people in that direction we publish Christopher News Notes seven times a year. To receive the News Notes—without charge—write to: Rev. John Catoir, Director, The Christophers, 12 East 48th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.